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## Reviews

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Father Nikon Patrinacos, who was born in the Byzantine city of Mistra, educated at the Universities of Athens, Queensland, and Oxford, has taught at Washington University in Saint Louis, served as Dean of the Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts, and taught at Saint Basil's Academy in Garrison, New York, and has filled a variety of administrative positions in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese in New York City, and is probably best known and appreciated as the former editor of *The Orthodox Observer* and the author of a number of provocative and important publications like *The Individual and His Orthodox Church*, *The Orthodox Church on Birth Control*, and *The Orthodox Liturgy* (as translator and editor).

The two books reviewed here naturally go together and have circulated within a few years of each other. The first and latest is the more general, while the second is a detailed reference book. In each case, the author has wished to confront the reader with those issues and that information which will make for an enlightened and informed Orthodox perspective. The title of the first book is perhaps a bit

pretentious because it does not contain "All that a Greek Orthodox Should Know" but rather a discussion of a great many questions and issues that every member of American society, sooner or later, in one way or another, has to confront and take a position on in his or her life. The five general chapters of this very handsomely produced handbook are entitled (1) "Greek Orthodoxy in the Modern World"; (2) "Questions and Problems"; (3) "Stages of Development in the Life of the Greek Orthodox"; (4) "The Sacramental Experience of the Greek Orthodox"; and (5) "The Greek Orthodox Concept of Being and Becoming." Such questions as who is Greek Orthodox and what is Greek Orthodoxy are discussed in detail, as are questions on the nature and scope of religion, the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, Orthodox spirituality, and personal happiness, but also more personal issues such as conception and birth control, abortion, baptism and baptismal names, first Communion, the religious education of the young, mixed marriages, divorce, parenthood, the obligations of siblings, the family as a reflection of the Church, the departed, the question of evil in the world, predestination and fate, personal freedom and its limitations, the sacraments, Holy Communion, fasting, repentance, and confession, the purpose of the world, man, creation, and death.

*All That a Greek Orthodox Should Know* contains forceful, forthright, and lucid discussion of a good number of the issues facing an Orthodox Christian in the contemporary world and does not hesitate to provide an Orthodox framework for solutions to those often vexing problems. Dr. Patrinos has an optimistic view of the future and sees a positive role for the Greek Orthodox Church. In Father Patrinos's own words:

The Orthodox Church being in reality a community of saints, seeks no power of any kind, has no dreams or intent to institutionally 'conquer the world,' or to teach nations the social or political systems of its own preference. Respecting the integrity and aspirations of individual believer as no other Church, it has grounds from old to bring peace first and foremost in the hearts of its faithful and to radiate its own spirituality to all those who would seek it. No other Church could so aptly befit the conditions of the twentieth century by keeping the fundamental principles of Christianity and at the same time recognizing legitimate needs and necessities among its people and prove thereby able to better serve them in Christ [p. 170.]



Throughout the half century of his priestly ministry, Dr. Patrinos has been dedicated to addressing and helping solve those problems of direct, personal concern to Orthodox Christians. *A Dictionary of Greek Orthodoxy* is a companion volume to *All That a Greek Orthodox Should Know*. It has already been much acclaimed and is really a one volume encyclopedia rather than a dictionary. It is beautifully illustrated by E. G. Zournatzis. In this book Father Patrinos provides the basic information that is needed for each entry (which also has the analogous Greek term in the margin as well as the English). The book aims to be "a compendium of the faith, liturgical practices, and ecclesiastical organization of the Greek Orthodox Church." Dr. Patrinos does not hesitate to point out problems and underline issues that are of concern to practicing Orthodox faithful. The Greek used in the volume is pretty much limited to the terms in the margins. *A Dictionary of Greek Orthodoxy* is a book for English readers, and those who do not know Greek should have absolutely no difficulty using it and profiting from it.

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Whether the reader is interested in matters of faith, practice, church history, institutional structure, rites and ritual, hagiography, contemporary social, moral, religious or theological issues, that reader has wide-margined pages with colored bold-faced entries appearing in the spacious margins at the sides of the text.

Those two most recent volumes by Father Patrinos make available to English-speaking and reading audiences extremely handy resources for understanding, appreciating, and living the Greek Orthodox faith. We are deeply in Father Patrinos's debt.

John E. Rexine  
Colgate University



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## Allegorical Flights of Fancy: The Problem of Origen's Exegesis

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CHARLES J. SCALISE

ORIGEN (C. A.D. 185-C. 255) PIONEERED IN THE PLACING OF BIBLICAL studies on a scholarly foundation, developing the discipline of text criticism especially through his *Hexapla*. He was one of the leading apologists for the Christian faith in the Hellenistic world—first in Alexandria (c. 185-c. 231) and then in Caesarea (c. 231-c. 255). R. P. C. Hanson describes the historical context of Origen's exegesis as a complex environment involving Gnostics, predestinarians, literalists, Marcionites, Jewish apologists, and Hellenistic philosophers (e.g. Kelsos)—not to mention the multitude of simple Christian believers.<sup>1</sup> In this lively, diverse, heresy-filled situation, Origen wrote as an expositor and defender of Scripture, teaching what he believed was intellectually sound Christian orthodoxy.

Yet despite all of Origen's brilliance and commitment — his vast scholarly erudition and spiritual vitality — something went wrong. The modern reader of his exegesis soon becomes aware of the problem. Fantastic allegory — simply incredible exegesis — appears in the midst of biblically-grounded, textually sensitive, historically perceptive exposition.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event* (London, 1959), pp. 133-61. Cf. Jean Daniélou, *Origen*, trans. Walter Mitchell (New York, 1958), pp. 141-43.

<sup>2</sup> Note M. F. Wiles' description of this situation in his assessment of Origen's *Commentary on John*: "Side by side with examples of profound theological exposition stand passages of allegorical interpretation which are entirely arbitrary in method and utterly unrelated in content to the meaning of the Gospel" (M. F. Wiles, *The Spiritual Gospel* [Cambridge, 1960], p. 159).

Numerous examples of this incredible exegesis could be cited in Origen's writings. Some of the most dramatic illustrations may be found in Origen's *Homilies on Leviticus*. For instance, in the midst of his third homily, he declares:

It will be too much now to describe the diversity of offerings and the ritual and varieties of sacrifices . . . But in order that we appear to touch briefly in passing on some, indeed almost every offering which is brought has something of the form and image of Christ. . . . we showed in the preceding how the calf offered by the high priest either in the offering or "for sin" had his form. But the "fatty parts," which were offered in the offering and were "hidden inwardly" and held together with the kidneys, can be understood as that holy soul of he who indeed is "inward." That is, it was covering the secrets of his divinity. But he was held together "with the kidneys," that is, with bodily matter which had been taken up in purity from us. . . . But what of the small kidney yielded to the fire? Does anyone doubt that they [*sic*] indicate there were none of the passions of the generative parts in Christ? But because "the high priest" is reminded to "sprinkle some of the blood of the sacrifice before the Lord seven times," the virtue of the Holy Spirit is evidently designated under the mystery of the seven spirits. The four "horns" of the altar, "which are anointed with the blood," point to the passion of Christ as related by the four gospels. . . . But I think that the rest of the blood which "is poured out at the base of the altar" represents the form of his grace . . . "in the last days."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Gary W. Barkley, trans., "Origen's *Homilies on Leviticus*: An Annotated Translation" (Ph.D. dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), *Leviticus Homily 3*, 5, pp. 66-67. Unfortunately, the text of Origen's *Homilies on Leviticus* is extant only in the Latin translation of Rufinus, who sought to make Origen appear more "orthodox" by the standards of Catholic dogma of a later time (Caroli Delarue and Caroli Vincente Delarue, eds., *Origenis Opera Omnia*, in PG 12.429-30). Lest the reader think that such far-fetched allegorism as that of this sample passage is just a temporary aberration in Origen, a further interpretation of the "fatty parts" of animal sacrifices as the soul of Christ may be found in *Homily 5*, 11 (Barkley, *Leviticus*, pp. 128-29). Other interpretations of the "fatty parts," relating them to Origen's Christian audience, may be found in *Homily 5*, 4 (ibid., p. 112) and 5, 8 (ibid., p. 120). For an extended homiletical illustration of this incredible allegorical exegesis, see *Homily 1*, 4-5 (ibid., pp. 32-37).



Reading such utterly fantastic exegesis one has the impression of witnessing a great teacher of Scripture committing "exegetical suicide."<sup>4</sup> What are the factors responsible for such incredible interpretation? This question is the problem which this paper seeks to address. It is argued that in the process of utilizing his exegetical method, Origen demonstrates a loss of hermeneutical control. This loss of control results from several factors: (1) an overly narrow understanding of *sensus literalis* of Scripture, (2) a move from typology to allegory in a quest for "spiritual meaning," and (3) a forced allegorism developing from a plenary verbal view of biblical inspiration.

### *Introduction to Origen's Exegetical Method*

In *On First Principles* (*Περὶ ἀρχῶν*) Origen makes his famous distinction of the three senses of Scripture. Origen seems to have derived this method of interpretation from Philo,<sup>5</sup> though this has sometimes been disputed.<sup>6</sup> Origen first distinguishes between literal and non-literal senses: "the bare letter" (τὸ ψιλὸν γράμμα) and "the spiritual sense" (τὰ πνευματικά).<sup>7</sup> The non-literal sense is subsequently divided into "moral" and "spiritual" senses, thus yielding three levels.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup>This is Hanson's dramatic characterization (Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 258).

<sup>5</sup>Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers*, Vol. 1, *Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, 3rd. ed., rev. (Cambridge, MA., 1970), pp. 57-60, 62. Wolfson especially points to Origen's "direct reference" in *Against Kelsos*, 7.20 to Philo's twofold sense of the law — the literal meaning (πρὸς τὸ ῥητόν) and the inner spiritual meaning (πρὸς διάνοιαν) (*Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der Ersten Drei Jahrhunderte: Origenes Werke* [Leipzig, 1899-1976] [hereafter referred to as *GCS*], 2, p. 171. English translation: Henry Chadwick, trans., *Origen: Contra Celsum* [Cambridge, 1965], 7.20, p. 411).

<sup>6</sup>For example, R. M. Grant partially disagrees with this view, instead holding that Origen's most extreme allegorical views are "not Philonic, but derived from Origen's studies of Greek grammar and rhetoric" (R. M. Grant, *The Letter and the Spirit* [London, 1957], p. 101). Nevertheless, Daniélou's analysis of Origen's allegory of the Ark (*Genesis Homily 2*) clearly demonstrates Origen's dependence upon Philo, down to some of the specific details of his exegesis (Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality*, trans. Dom Wulstand Hibberd [London, 1960], pp. 103-12).

<sup>7</sup>G. W. Butterworth, trans., *Origen On First Principles*, (London, 1936), 4.2.2, p. 72; PG 11.360.

<sup>8</sup>On the relation between Origen's doctrine of accommodation and the differing senses of meaning, see Henry Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition* (Oxford, 1966), p. 75. Also, cf. E. Glenn Hinson, *The Evangelization of the Roman Empire* (Macon, Ga., 1981), p. 203.

Though Origen appeals to Proverbs 22.20-21 (as translated in the Septuagint — τρισῶς<sup>9</sup>) for scriptural support of his threefold method of interpretation, it is Greek anthropology that provides his primary ground for argument:

For just as man consists of body (σώματος), soul (ψυχῆς), and spirit (πνεύματος), so in the same way (τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον) does the Scripture which has been prepared (οἰκονομοθεῖσα) by God to be given for man's salvation.<sup>10</sup>

Often in the actual practice of exegesis Origen's three levels are collapsed back into two: the literal (bodily) and the spiritual.<sup>11</sup> For Origen "all [Scripture] has a spiritual meaning (τὸ πνευματικόν), but not all a bodily meaning [τὸ σωματικόν]" <sup>12</sup> Though Origen sees much of Scripture as historical, the historicity of Scripture is itself unimportant.<sup>13</sup> It is the *spiritual* meaning of Scripture that matters.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, Origen holds that the Word "has arranged for

<sup>9</sup>See G. Kittel, ed., *Biblia Hebraica*, Stuttgartensia, 3rd. ed., p. 1181.

<sup>10</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.4, p. 276; PG 11.365. Cf. also Origen's emphasis on the harmony or concord (συμφωνία) of body, soul, and spirit in his *Commentary on Matthew*, 14.3 (John Patrick, trans., "Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 9, 3rd. ed., ed. A. Menzies [New York, 1899], p. 496. GCS, 10, p. 278).

<sup>11</sup>Cf. M. F. Wiles, "Origen as Biblical Scholar," *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Vol. 1, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 467-68. Also, N. R. M. de Lange, *Origen and the Jews* (Cambridge, 1976), p. 109. Origen likes to appeal to Paul's distinction between "the letter" and "the spirit" of the Law (2 Cor 3.6), though Origen's allegorical approach represents a dramatic departure from the generally more historical perspective of Paul. Even in the relatively few places where Paul explicitly uses an allegorical approach (e.g., the story of Sarah and Hagar in Gal 4.22-26), the "historical pattern" of the Old Testament is preserved (K. J. Woollcombe, "The Biblical Origins and Patristic Development of Typology," in *Essays on Typology* [Naperville, Ill., 1957], p. 53).

<sup>12</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.3.5, p. 297; PG 11.385. N. R. M. de Lange traces Origen's view that every word of Scripture has a deeper meaning back through Aquila's Greek version to the rabbinic exegesis of Akiba (de Lange, *Jews*, pp. 107, 110-11).

<sup>13</sup>Hanson (*Allegory*, pp. 258-88) provides a detailed discussion of issues related to the historicity of Scripture in Origen.

<sup>14</sup>As Hanson (*Allegory*, p. 280) comments, for Origen, "History . . . is meaningless unless a parable is derived from it, unless it is made into an allegory."

certain stumbling blocks (σκάνδαλα)" in the literal sense of Scripture, with the primary purpose of leading readers to seek the higher, mystical wisdom<sup>15</sup> and with the secondary purpose of "concealing (κρύπτειν)" the higher doctrine from "those who were unable to endure the burden of investigating matters of such importance."<sup>16</sup> Origen maintains that the composition of Scripture involved a process of occasionally "weaving in" mystical meanings in the form of events which did not correspond to the events of history.<sup>17</sup> As he contends in *Homilies on Genesis*, "I have often said already that in these stories history is not being narrated (*narrantur*), but mysteries are interwoven (*mysteria contextuntur*)."<sup>18</sup>

### *Exegetical Boundaries: Origen vs. Gnosticism*

In his role as an apologist for the Christian faith Origen found himself in debate with a variety of groups, both external (e.g., Hellenistic philosophers, Jewish rabbis) and internal (e.g., Marcionites, Gnostics) to the Church. Such polemical discussion led Origen to clarify his understanding of Christian doctrine and his interpretation of Scripture so that he could more adequately defend them. In terms of Origen's exegetical methodology, perhaps the most important of these opponents was the Valentinian Gnostic Herakleon, who is known primarily through Origen's refutation in the *Commentary on John*.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.9, p. 285; PG 11.373. In his *Commentary on Matthew* Origen even goes so far as to speak of "the repentance [μετάνοιαν] from the letter unto the spirit" (Patrick, "Matthew," 10.15, p. 423. *GCS*, 10.10.14, p. 18. Cf. Henri de Lubac, *The Sources of Revelation*, trans. Luke G. O'Neill [New York, 1968], p. 92.

<sup>16</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.8, p. 284; PG 11.373. Charles Bigg characterizes this as the "rule of Reserve" or "Economy," in both Clement of Alexandria and Origen (Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* [Oxford, 1913], pp. 178-84; cf. *Against Kelsos*, 3.52-53. Chadwick, *Contra Celsum*, pp. 164-65. *GCS*, 1, pp. 248-49). Hanson holds that this "method of Reserve" moves Origen towards "an almost Gnostic view" (R. P. C. Hanson, *Origen's Doctrine of Tradition* [London, 1954], p. 77).

<sup>17</sup>Cf. Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.9, p. 286; PG 11.376. Grant (*The Letter*, pp. 95-96) points to Strabo's view of Homeric poetry and Aristotle's *Poetics* as earlier classical parallels.

<sup>18</sup>*Genesis Homily 10*, 4. Donald E. Heine, trans., *Origen: Homilies on Genesis and Exodus, The Fathers of the Church*, 71 (Washington, D.C., 1982), p. 164; PG 12.218. Cf. Frederic W. Farrer, *History of Interpretation* (London, 1886), p. 198.

<sup>19</sup>There is one reference to Herakleon in Clement of Alexandria

Herakleon wrote a commentary (ὕπομνήματα) on John, which is no longer extant. From Origen's use of it one can easily discern its strongly predestinarian cosmological themes, which are described through allegorical exegesis.<sup>20</sup> For example, according to Origen, Herakleon interprets Jesus' going up to Jerusalem to cleanse the Temple in John 2.13-14 as follows:

[Herakleon] says that the ascent (ἀνοδὸν) to Jerusalem signifies the Lord's going up from material things (τῶν ὕλικῶν) to the spiritual place (τὸν ψυχικόν τόπον) which is a likeness to Jerusalem. And he considers that the words are, "He found in the temple (τῷ ἱερῷ)" and not "in the sanctuary (τῷ ναῷ)," because the Lord is not to be understood in that call only, which takes place where the spirit is not. He considers the temple to be the Holy of Holies, into which none but the High Priest enters, and there I believe that he says that the spiritual (πνευματικούς) go, while the court of the temple, where the levites also enter, is a symbol of the psychical ones (ψυχικῶν) who are saved, but outside the Pleroma.<sup>21</sup>

Origen vigorously refutes most of Herakleon's interpretations, especially those that advocate a Gnostic cosmology of creation through a demiurge<sup>22</sup> and a natural view of predestination.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless,

(*Stromateis*, 4.9) as well (Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 144). Origen's refutation of Herakleon is often described as "unfair" by modern scholars (e.g., Allan Menzies, "Commentaries of Origen: Introduction," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 9, 3rd. ed., ed. A. Menzies [New York, 1899], p. 291; also, Carl Moss, "Origen's *Commentary on John*, Book XIII: A Translation with Annotations" [Ph.D. Dissertation, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1982], p. 7) who point out that some of Herakleon's exegetical insights are more acceptable to the modern interpreter than Origen's. (For a list of such passages, see Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 146). Origen's severe treatment of Herakleon may perhaps partially be accounted for by the *similarity* of their exegetical methods, which forces Origen to distance himself from his exegetical opponent.

<sup>20</sup>Cf. Hanson, *Allegory*, pp. 144-47. Also, see Moss, *John*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>21</sup>Allan Menzies, trans., "Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of John," *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 9, 3rd. ed., ed. A. Menzies (New York, 1899), 10.19, p. 399. *GCS*, 4.10.33, pp. 206-07.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. Origen's first attack on Herakleon in his *Commentary on John*. Menzies, "John," 2.8, p. 331. *GCS*, 4.2.14, pp. 70-71. Hanson (*Allegory*, p. 145) notes the similarity here between the views of Herakleon and those of the Marcionites, especially in their willingness to tamper with the text of Scripture. (Herakleon adds a phrase to the text of John 1.3 to support his Gnostic views.)

<sup>23</sup>Cf. Origen's refutation of Herakleon's view that, "the Lord brought life

one cannot help but be struck by the remarkable similarities between the views of Origen and his Gnostic opponent.<sup>24</sup> At times it seems as if Origen even verges on advocating his own modified version of "orthodox" Gnosticism in opposition to Herakleon.<sup>25</sup> For example, in his exegesis of John 4.46-54 (John's second "sign," the healing of the royal official's son), Origen first interprets the royal official as symbolizing Abraham, while his son, who was ill in Capernaum, symbolizes "the Israelite race."<sup>26</sup> Then, however, Origen goes on to offer a second interpretation, which though differing from that of Herakleon,<sup>27</sup> is strikingly Gnostic.

One must see whether the royal official is a figure (εἰκών) for a certain one of the *archons* of this *aeon* and whether his son [is a figure], in a different way from him, for the people under his power (that I might say that they are) in this way, a figure of the elect with him and whether the illness is the evil disposition contrary to the choice of the *archon*. Capernaum is, then, a figure for the place of abode of those under the *archon's* [rule]. I think that even some of the *archons* because they were struck

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only to the spiritual" (Menzies, "John," 2.15, p. 335. *GCS*, 4.2.21, pp. 77-78). See Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 142. Also, note Origen's refutations of Herakleon in his exposition of John 8.33-47 (the fatherhood of Abraham, the devil, and God) in Book 20.1-34 (*GCS*, 4, pp. 327-73). See the helpful discussion of M. F. Wiles on "determinism" in John (Wiles, *Gospel*, pp. 107-10).

<sup>24</sup>Daniélou offers an insightful discussion of the influence of Gnostic exegesis upon Origen's interpretation, which focuses especially upon Herakleon's influence. The concrete example of Origen's Gnostic interpretation of the parables is discussed in detail (Daniélou, *Origen*, pp. 191-99). Also, G. Quispel has argued strongly for Valentinian Gnostic influence upon major doctrinal themes in Origen. Quispel provisionally assumes that the author of the fourth treatise of the Jung Codex found at Nag Hammadi is Herakleon (G. Quispel, "Origen and the Valentinian Gnosis," *Vigiliae Christianae*, 28 [1974] 29-42).

<sup>25</sup>Hanson flatly claims that, "The Gnostics . . . taught the Catholics to allegorize the New Testament" (R. P. C. Hanson, "Biblical Exegesis in the Early Church," *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans [Cambridge, 1970], 1, p. 418).

<sup>26</sup>Moss, *John*, 13.58, pp. 161-64, especially p. 163. *GCS*, 4, pp. 288-89.

<sup>27</sup>According to Origen, "Herakleon seems to say that the royal official was the *Demiurge* since he himself ruled like a king over those under him" (Moss, *John*, 13.60, pp. 167-68. *GCS*, 4, p. 291).

at [the Savior's] power and divinity, fled to [the Savior] and petitioned him concerning those who were administered by them. Since, at some times, men are capable of repentance and pass from unbelief into belief, why should he hesitate to say the same thing of the powers? . . . I think that something about the *archons* is changed for the better at Christ's coming so that some whole towns or even nations held the things that point to the Messiah more readily than many [others].<sup>28</sup>

Despite the incredible allegorical flights of fancy and Gnostic themes in parts of his exegesis, Origen does not take the final step of breaking all connection between history and interpretation.<sup>29</sup> As M. F. Wiles observes, “. . . in the great majority of cases he prefers to suggest the most far-fetched harmonizing explanation rather than to apply the principle of non-historicity.”<sup>30</sup> Origen does not abandon the historical grounding of the Christian faith<sup>31</sup> for total immersion in cosmological speculations, as did Herakleon<sup>32</sup> and other Gnostics of his time. What prevented Origen from taking this final

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<sup>28</sup>Moss, *John*, 13.59, pp. 166-67. In this quotation brackets around English words are used to indicate words provided by Moss in his translation for which there is no corresponding word in the Greek text (*GCS*, 4, pp. 290-91).

<sup>29</sup>For example, Woolcombe points to Origen's rejection of Gnostic interpretations which see Jesus' healing miracles solely as allegories of spiritual cures (ψυχῆς θεραπείας) in his *Commentary on John* (Woolcombe, “Typology,” p. 57, n. 4. *GCS*, 24.20.20, p. 352). As Eugène de Faye declares, “Allegorist though he was, he never dreamt of giving up the historicity of the Gospel narrative” (Eugène de Faye, *Origen and His Work* [New York, 1929], pp. 112-13).

<sup>30</sup>Wiles, “Origen,” p. 471.

<sup>31</sup>Cf. Søren Kierkegaard's notion of “a historical point of departure” for Christian faith in *Philosophical Fragments* (trans. David Swenson and Howard Hong [Princeton, 1962]), which may perhaps be an apt modern characterization of Origen's view of the relationship between history and faith.

<sup>32</sup>Wiles concludes that, “The real difference between them [Origen and Herakleon] is not one of method but of theological concern. The heart of Herakleon's theological interest was a celestial drama of salvation, of which the events on this earth were a kind of shadow” (Wiles, *Gospel* p. 160). Hinson observes that Origen “favored ecclesiological rather than cosmological speculations,” citing the difference between Herakleon's and Origen's interpretations of the story of the Samaritan woman in John 4 (*Commentary on John*, 13.8-11. Hinson, *Evangelization*, pp. 198-99, 204).

step? There is nothing in his exegetical methodology, with its encouragement of allegorical speculation, which would seem to discourage a purely Gnostic approach. Instead, as Fred Grissom (following Daniélou) has observed, it was Origen's commitment as a churchman "... which operated as a check on his exegesis."<sup>33</sup> As Origen himself declares,

I bear the title of priest [*presbyter*] and, as you see, I preach the word of God. But if I do anything contrary to the discipline of the Church [*ecclesiasticam disciplinam*] or the rule laid down in the Gospels [*Evangelii regulam*] — if I give offense [*scandalum*] to you and to the Church — then I hope the whole Church will unite [*conspirans*] with one consent and cast me off [*excidate me dexteram suam*] et projiciat a se].<sup>34</sup>

Origen's commitment to the Church functions in two ways as a check upon his exegesis. First, the Church's ecclesiastical discipline, which particularly governs his role as a teaching *presbyter*, determines some institutional boundaries. Origen understands himself as an orthodox Christian who is committed to struggle on behalf of the Church against the heretics.<sup>35</sup> Second, the "rule of the Gospels"<sup>36</sup> (i.e., the core content of the Christian story, which later eventually develops into the formal *regula fidei*)<sup>37</sup> provides some

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<sup>33</sup>Fred A. Grissom, "A Critique of Hanson's and Daniélou's Use of the Terms 'Typology' and 'Allegory' in their Descriptions of Origen's Exegesis," in *The Bible in the Early Church*, ed. E. Glenn Hinson (Unpublished seminar papers, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Spring, 1975), pp. 23-24. Cf. de Faye's observation that the source of Origen's faith is not in the Scripture but in the living apostolic tradition (de Faye, *Origen*, pp. 51-52).

<sup>34</sup>Origen, *In Librum Jesu Nave, Homilia* 7, 6; PG 12.862. The English translation is from Daniélou's *Origen* (p. 8). Note the omission of Origen's allusion to Matthew 5.30 ("cut off my right hand") in Daniélou's translation.

<sup>35</sup>For instance, in Book 13.44 of the *Commentary on John*, Origen contrasts Herakleon's interpretation with that of "some member of the orthodox Church [τις . . . ἐκκλησιαστικὸς]" who is familiar with the matter (Moss, *John*, pp. 120-21. *GCS*, 4, p. 270).

<sup>36</sup>According to Hanson, the κανὼν of Scripture in Origen is "simply the way the Church had always interpreted Scripture as far as he knew" (Hanson, *Tradition*, p. 95). Hanson further argues that the κανὼν includes the allegorization of Scripture for Origen (*ibid.*, p. 97).

<sup>37</sup>Hanson demonstrates that for Origen the rule of faith simply means "the Christian faith as it was preached and taught in his day" (*ibid.*, p. 113).

control<sup>38</sup> over the content of his exegesis. Origen's interpretation must not be shown to be opposed to the central message of the Gospels. Nevertheless, within these important but rather vague and unspecified boundaries, Origen both possesses and exercises the greatest exegetical freedom possible through his allegorical method.

### *Origen and the "Sensus Literalis"*

Origen holds a rigid, narrow view of the *sensus literalis* of Scripture.<sup>39</sup> He rather disparagingly refers to the literal interpretation of Scripture as "obvious" (πρόχειρον), conceding its necessity, "so that the simple man (ἀπλούστερος) may be edified by what we call the flesh (σάρκός) of Scripture."<sup>40</sup> Origen graphically depicts the literal sense in his first homily on Leviticus:

I myself think that the priest removes the hide "of the calf" offered as a "whole burnt offering" and pulls away the skin with

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Hinson (*Evangelization*, p. 204) argues for the importance of the rule of faith in "providing sounder expositions than his exegetical approach might otherwise have allowed."

<sup>38</sup>Hanson, citing especially Origen's rejection of the resurrection of the flesh as a necessary belief, holds that, "Origen is quite capable of setting aside the Church's rule of faith" (Hanson, *Tradition*, p. 106). Instead, it would seem fairer to Origen to say that in this instance he is seeking from the Scripture to modify the Church's rule of faith, rather than just "setting it aside."

<sup>39</sup>Raymond Brown maintains that for Origen if Christ were "spoken of as the 'lion of Judah' the literal sense . . . would be that he was an animal" (Raymond E. Brown, "The Literal Sense of Scripture," *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, ed. R. Brown, J. Fitzmeyer, and R. Murphy [Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1968], p. 607). Note also Brown's evaluation of Origen's exegesis in "More-Than-Literal Senses" on pp. 611-12. In addition, cf. Wiles, "Origen," p. 470. In contrast, Henri du Lubac attempts to distinguish between "the letter" and "literal meaning" in Origen's interpretation. "The letter" is described as "a sort of sterilized literal meaning, stripped of the spiritual potencies which lie, like seeds, within it" (de Lubac, *Revelation*, p. 18). Such a view unnecessarily complicates Origen's contrasting exegetical levels, proliferating categories which Origen does not seem to acknowledge and which are not warranted by his actual exposition.

<sup>40</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.4, pp. 275-76; PG 11.364. Grant perceptively makes the important point that for Origen, "Condemning literalism does not involve condemning literalists" (Grant, *The Letter*, p. 90). Wiles suggests that a distinction should be made between the literalism of "simple unintellectual believers," which Origen tolerates, and that of "others of a Judaizing tendency," which he bitterly opposes (Wiles, "Origen," p. 472).



which its limbs are covered. He who removes the veil of the letter [*velamen litterae*] from the word of God uncovers its interior parts which are members of spiritual understanding.<sup>41</sup>

In *On First Principles* Origen portrays literal interpretation of Scripture for the multitudes as analogous to Paul's "unmuzzled oxen" treading corn! "Is it for the oxen that God is concerned? Does he not speak entirely for our sake?" (1 Cor 9.9-10).<sup>42</sup> God has given the Scripture so that people may discover its *spiritual* meaning, rather than its literal one.

Moreover, Origen claims that there are passages of Scripture which "make no literal sense at all (τὸ σωματικὸν οὐδαμῶς ἔχουσι)," thus requiring the reader to seek only the moral and spiritual meanings of the words.<sup>43</sup> To take one simple instance<sup>44</sup> from Genesis 1, Origen asks,

Now what man of intelligence (νοῦν ἔχων) will believe that the first, second, and third day, and the evening and the morning existed without the sun, moon, and stars?<sup>45</sup>

Once Origen has decided that a passage of Scripture should be taken allegorically in order to be properly understood, he has little patience with other interpreters who want to defend the literal sense of the text. A classic example of this occurs in his *Commentary on John* where Origen ridicules Herakleon and "many others" for taking

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<sup>41</sup>*Leviticus Homily 1*, 4. Barkley, *Leviticus*, pp. 32-33; PG 12.409. Also, cf. *Leviticus Homily 5*, 1. Barkley, *Leviticus*, pp. 100-01; PG 12.447.

<sup>42</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.6, p. 279; PG 11.368. Cf. Deuteronomy 25.4 for the Old Testament law to which Paul is referring. Other instances of Pauline "allegory" which are significant for Origen include Gal 4.22-26 (Sarah and Hagar, see above n. 11) 1 Cor 10.1-4 (the Red Sea crossing and baptism), Col 2.17 (the law as a shadow of things to come), Eph 5.32 (marriage in Genesis and Christ and the Church). For a good introductory discussion concerning Origen's use of these and other inner biblical interpretations, see Wiles, "Origen," pp. 465-66.

<sup>43</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.2.5, pp. 277-78; PG 11.365.

<sup>44</sup>Hanson, (*Allegory*, pp. 239-41) provides an extensive listing of these passages in Origen's writing. Hanson also suggests that Origen's opposition to eschatological literalism, especially millenarianism, plays a major role in his opposition to literal exegesis (Hanson, "Exegesis," pp. 433-35).

<sup>45</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 4.3.1, p. 288; PG 11.376-77.

John 4.35 ("There are yet four months and the harvest comes") in a literal sense.<sup>46</sup> It is certainly ironical to see Origen attack a speculative Gnostic like Herakleon for not being mystical (ἀνάγεσθαι) enough!

In an overview of Origen's literal use of Scripture in *On First Principles*, Gary Barkley observes that Origen frequently resorts to a method of prooftexting.<sup>47</sup> Prooftexting exegesis was, of course, quite common in early Christianity, especially in regard to Messianic ideas. Numerous examples may be found in the use of the Old Testament in the New. Early Christianity probably derived this method from Jewish exegesis (e.g., the Habakkuk *peshet* from Qumran).<sup>48</sup> For Origen literal prooftexting was often a "first line of defense against heretics."<sup>49</sup> Yet due to the rigid narrowness of his definition of the *sensus literalis*, the polemical utility of this literal level for Origen is soon exhausted. He quickly moves on to use either the moral and spiritual senses of Scripture or rational argument and philosophical speculation against his opponents. In *On First Principles*, for example, Origen begins by arguing that God is light and so cannot have a body at all (literally prooftexting 1 John 1.5). Then in the same paragraph (shifting to the spiritual sense) he immediately goes on to argue that in 1 John 1.5 light is *symbolic* of God's "spiritual power." He even asks, "For can we possibly think that because it is termed light, it is like the light of the sun?"<sup>50</sup>

Thus, Origen's overly narrow view of the *sensus literalis* forces him to abandon this primary level as soon as possible in the quest for spiritual meaning. This results in a downplaying of the literal sense — at times to the point of disparagement — with the consequence that much of the text's ability to exert hermeneutical control over interpretation is lost.

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<sup>46</sup>Origen, *Origen, Commentary on John*, 13.40.41; Moss, *John*, pp. 111-12 (especially n. 109). GCS, 4, pp. 266-67. Cf. also Origen's critique in 13.53 of Herakleon's interpretation of John 4.42 (Moss, *John*, p. 150. GCS, 4, p. 283).

<sup>47</sup>Gary Barkley, "Allegory and Typology in Origen's *De Principiis*," in *The Role of Institutional Forms in the Early Christian Mission*, ed. E. Glenn Hinson (unpublished seminar papers, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fall, 1981), pp. 9-13.

<sup>48</sup>Hanson, "Exegesis," pp. 412-13.

<sup>49</sup>Barkley, "Allegory," p. 13.

<sup>50</sup>Butterworth, *First Principles*, 1.1.1, p. 7; PG 11.121.

*From Typology to Allegory*

One of the major debates concerning Origen's exegesis in modern scholarship is the relationship between typology and allegory. This debate is complicated by the fact that those who view Origen's exegesis as primarily typological give a broad definition to typology. For example, Daniélou includes interpretations of "the mystery of Christ living in the Church and in souls," as well as traditional prediction-fulfillment motifs, in his broad category of typology.<sup>51</sup> In contrast, those who view Origen's exegesis as primarily allegorical give a narrow definition to typology, thus making allegory the broad category. For example, Hanson clearly reveals this narrow definition of typology and broad definition of allegory in the following definitions:

Typology is the interpreting of an event belonging to the present or the recent past as the fulfillment of a similar situation recorded or prophesied in Scripture. Allegory is the interpretation of an object or person or a number of objects or persons as in reality meaning some object or person of a later time, with no attempt to trace a relationship of "similar situation" between them.<sup>52</sup>

Wiles is certainly correct that the problem with this debate is that it asks "the wrong question" — viz., whether Origen is "primarily typological or allegorical."<sup>53</sup> Both typology and allegory are interwoven throughout the fabric of Origen's exegesis. Wiles, however, seems to be incorrect when he implies that because "Origen himself shows no sign of distinguishing his different figurative interpretations in that way," a distinction between typology and allegory is not a useful one at all.<sup>54</sup> Though typology and allegory are found in Origen's exegesis,<sup>55</sup> their relationship offers an important clue as to

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<sup>51</sup>Daniélou, *Origen*, p. 265. Cf. Grissom, "Critique," p. 8. For Daniélou allegory may even become Christian typology. In one example he states that, "With Origen the allegory of Philo will be incorporated into Christian tradition and become part of the traditional typology" (Daniélou, *Shadows*, p. 219).

<sup>52</sup>Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 7.

<sup>53</sup>Wiles, "Origen," p. 482.

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup>Grissom, "Critique," p. 21. Grissom argues for Daniélou's more "flexible" categories rather than Hanson's "narrow" ones, thus holding a minority position in this debate. Scholarly consensus generally now seems to support Hanson's view (cf. Hinson, *Evangelization*, p. 196).

the nature of Origen's loss of hermeneutical control. For the purpose of this paper, Hanson's stricter definition of typology and broader definition of allegory will be adopted. (In order to accommodate Gnostic allegory, which interprets prehistorical or ahistorical [mythical] events,<sup>56</sup> Hanson's reference to "a later time" in his definition should be changed to "another time.") The principle reason for this choice is that Hanson's definitions — unlike Daniélou's more flexible categories — clearly distinguish between typology's direct connection with biblical narrative ("a similar situation recorded or prophesied in Scripture") and allegory's lack of such a direct hermeneutical connection.

G. W. H. Lampe points to the criterion of historical connection for distinguishing between traditional ("legitimate") typology and allegory. Lampe states that,

Allegory differs radically from the kind of typology which rests upon the perception of actual historical fulfillment. The reason for this great difference is that allegory takes no account of history. The exegete has to penetrate through the shell of history to the inner kernel of eternal spiritual or moral truth.<sup>57</sup>

In Lampe's view, allegorical exegesis turns the Bible into "a single vast volume of oracles and riddles,"<sup>58</sup> which "vitiates the appeal to Scripture for the establishment or confirmation of doctrine."<sup>59</sup> This problem certainly characterizes Origen's allegorical exegesis. As Wiles declares, "The great difficulty about so many of Origen's spiritual

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<sup>56</sup>Cf. Daniélou, *Origen*, p. 196.

<sup>57</sup>G. W. H. Lampe, "The Reasonableness of Typology," in *Essays on Typology* (Naperville, IL., 1957), p. 31.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid. Cf. Hanson, "Exegesis," pp. 419-20 for further description of the "oracular" view of the Bible in early Christianity. Henri du Lubac strongly disagrees with such an understanding of allegory in patristic (and medieval) exegesis, contending that Christian allegory is radically different from pagan allegory and is "historically connected" to "the Fact of Christ." Note his passionate defense of Origen in particular (de Lubac, *Revelation*, pp. 169-72) and his attack upon Hanson's *Allegory and Event* (ibid., p. 170, n. 49; also, p. 179, n. 42). The idealization of "Christian allegory" by de Lubac — particularly his claim for its "incontestable originality" — represents a major weakness in his analysis. One can almost envision de Lubac as a contemporary Rufinus!

<sup>59</sup>Lampe, "Typology," p. 33.

interpretations . . . lies in this fact of their almost total lack of connection with the straightforward historical sense."<sup>60</sup>

Lampe's historical criterion is weakened by the continuing uncertainty concerning the historical status of much of the material in the Bible, at least by modern historiographic standards. Modern historical-critical study has generally diminished rather than increased confidence in the Scripture itself (not to mention its typological interpretation!) as an accurate witness to historical events. Nevertheless, Lampe's analysis points to a significant difference between typological and allegorical interpretations. Typological interpretation takes seriously the "history-like"<sup>61</sup> character of the biblical narratives, while allegorical interpretation ignores this important dimension.

In Origen's exegesis the typological with its historical reference is not the final level of meaning. In his tenth homily on Leviticus, he explains that,

. . . the law and all things which are in the law are, according to the opinion of the Apostle [*sic* — Paul? — cf. Heb 9.10] "imposed until the time of correction [*correctionis*]." Just as those whose craft it is to make tokens [*signa*] from copper and to pour statues, before they produce a true work [*verum opus*] of copper or of silver or of gold, first form figures [*figmentum*] from the clay to the likeness of the future image — certainly the image is necessary but only until the work that is principal be completed [*expleatur*], but when that work on account of which that image was made of clay is completed, its use is no longer sought — understand

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<sup>60</sup>Wiles, "Origen," p. 472. In contrast, de Lubac defends the role of allegory in establishing "spiritual understanding." He declares that traditional typology "lacks the ability to show that the New Testament is something other than a second Old Testament which, at its term, would leave us completely within the thread of history. It does not express the connection between spiritual understanding and the personal conversion and life of the Christian . . ." (de Lubac, *Revelation*, p. 144). Though de Lubac's critique of the weaknesses of typology generally seems valid, his effort to rehabilitate "spiritual understanding" simply ignores the great weaknesses of allegory as a method of exegesis, as vividly illustrated by Origen's fantastic allegorical interpretations. The interpreter is left with his subjective faith experience in Jesus Christ as the norm for valid exegesis — what de Lubac calls "an exegesis in faith" (ibid., pp. 146-47).

<sup>61</sup>This term is used by Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (New Haven, 1974).

also something like this in these things which were written or done “in a type” [*in typo*] and in a figure [*figura*] of the future in the law and the prophets.<sup>62</sup>

So, once they have been fulfilled, Old Testament types have lost any usefulness or significance in themselves. As Origen proclaims in his first homily on Joshua, “Therefore, Moses the servant of God is dead (*defunctus*): for the law is dead, and legal commands (*praecepta*) now cease.”<sup>63</sup> Moreover, Origen claims that at this point the type might even “hinder (ἐμποδίζειν) the manifestation of the truth.”<sup>64</sup>

For Origen the quest for “spiritual meaning” does not cease until it reaches the level of “eternal truth” via allegory.<sup>65</sup> As he declares in his *Commentary on John*,

We ought not to suppose that historical events are types (τύπους) of other historical events, and material things (τὰ σωματικά) of other material things; rather material things are types of spiritual things (πνευματικῶν) and historical events of intelligible realities (νοητῶν).<sup>66</sup>

Thus, in Origen one of the marks of the loss of hermeneutical control is the loss of the “history-like” character of the text, as allegory in quest of spiritual meaning comes into predominance over traditional typology.

### *Verbal Inspiration and Forced Allegorism*

Despite all his monumental text critical work, Origen holds firmly

<sup>62</sup>*Leviticus Homily* 10.1. Barkley, *Leviticus*, pp. 244-45. PG 12.525.

<sup>63</sup>*In Librum Jesu Nave, Homilia 1*, 3; PG 12.828. The literal English translation is that of this writer. Cf. de Lubac, *Revelation*, p. 102, n. 15. As de Lubac comments, “. . . ‘Moses is dead,’ so that another life, a higher life, might follow upon his. Until then we had ‘shadow,’ now we have ‘Truth’ ” (ibid., p. 102).

<sup>64</sup>*Commentary on John*, 28.12. GCS, 4, p. 404. Woollcombe, “Typology,” p. 72, n. 6.

<sup>65</sup>Wiles, “Origen,” p. 484.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid. GCS, 10.18, p. 189.

to a strict view of the verbal inspiration of Scripture.<sup>67</sup> For example, in a fragment from his homily on Jeremiah 39.1, he states, "And there is not 'one jot or tittle' (ἰῶτα ἔν ἡ μία κεραία) written in the Scripture, which does not do its own work for those who understand to use [it] in the power of the letters (τῇ δυνάμει τῶν γραμμάτων)." <sup>68</sup>

Origen believes that every word of the Scripture was literally inspired by the Holy Spirit, and yet at the same time he is also a close enough observer of the text to see its contradictions. Therefore, he is forced into the position of advocating that biblical statements which are false and contradictory in the literal sense must *necessarily* be true in the spiritual sense.<sup>69</sup> For example, in his *Commentary on John* he boldly states:

I do not condemn them [the four Evangelists] if they even sometimes dealt freely with things which to the eye of history happened differently (ἐτέρως γινόμενον), and changed (μετατιθέναι) them so as to subserve the mystical aims (μυστικοῦ σκοποῦ) they had in view, so as to speak of a thing which happened in a certain place as if it happened in another, and to introduce into what was spoken in a certain way some changes (τίνος παραλλαγῆς) of their own. They supposed to speak the truth where it was possible both materially (σωματικῶς) and spiritually, and where this

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<sup>67</sup>Hanson (*Allegory*, pp. 187-99), following Zöllig (*Die Inspirationslehre des Origenes*, 1902) conclusively demonstrates Origen's strong adherence to verbal inspiration. One might even speculate that Origen's strict view of verbal inspiration helped to motivate his painstaking text critical work. For a dissenting view denying Origen's adherence to verbal inspiration, see Moss (*John*, p. 184), who points to the fact that Origen "had no difficulty in blaming the Evangelist for an apparent contradiction in the text," citing as an example Origen's *Commentary on John*, 13.54. This view is inadequate because it ignores the role of the spiritual sense in sustaining Origen's position on verbal inspiration.

<sup>68</sup>Origen, *Jeremiahomilien*, Fragmente Nr. 2 aus der *Philocalie*, Jer 39.1, GCS, 3, p. 197. The literal translation is that of this writer. Cf. Hanson's description of the passage (*Allegory*, p. 188). Other evidence cited by Hanson in support of Origen's strict view of verbal inspiration includes *Philocalia* 2.4 (from Origen's *Commentary on Psalms*, "Psalm 1") and Origen's *Commentary on Romans* 2.6 and 9.41.

<sup>69</sup>This connection between Origen's view of verbal inspiration and his forced allegorism is argued by Farrer, *Interpretation*, pp. 189-94.

was not possible it was their intention to prefer (προκρίνειν) the spiritual to the material. The spiritual truth was often preserved, as one might say, in the material falsehood (σωματικῶ . . . ψεύδει).<sup>70</sup>

As an example of this situation, Origen cites Jacob's impersonation of Esau to steal the blessing from Isaac (Gen 27), claiming that "spiritually he [Jacob] spoke the truth."<sup>71</sup> He argues further that, "if Jacob had not been blessed as Esau, neither would Esau perhaps have been able to receive a blessing of his own."<sup>72</sup> Origen does not shrink back from the logical implications of his exegetical methodology here. Every word must be spiritually true in its intended meaning, even if it is an obvious literal lie ("I am Esau thy firstborn son" — Gen 27.19).<sup>73</sup> Origen's view of plenary verbal inspiration combines with his exegetical method to force him into mental gymnastics of interpretation which make even the most dogmatic modern inerrantist seem like an amateur harmonizer. Unfortunately, when one's belief in the truth of Scripture leads him or her to contend that even lies must be spiritually true, then valid interpretation becomes impossible and "exegetical suicide" is close at hand. Such a loss of hermeneutical control must be viewed as fatal for responsible exegesis.

### Conclusion

This paper has wrestled with the problem of Origen's fantastic exegesis. How could such a brilliant, dedicated Christian scholar produce such incredible, arbitrary, eisegetical interpretations alongside of sober, perceptive, textually sensitive exegesis? The author has sought to demonstrate that Origen's exegesis reveals a loss of hermeneutical control, which results from three major factors: (1) an overly narrow understanding of the *sensus literalis* of Scripture, (2) a move from typology to allegory in a quest for "spiritual interpretation," and (3) a forced allegorism developing from a plenary verbal view of biblical inspiration. So, what does Origen, this great "wayward

<sup>70</sup>Menzies, "John," 10.4, p. 383. *GCS*, 4.10.5, p. 175.

<sup>71</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup>On God's lying to people for their spiritual good, Hanson (*Tradition*, p. 85) cites Origen's *Homilies on Jeremiah*, 20.3 (*GCS*, 3, pp. 179-82), expounding Jeremiah 20.7.



genius,"<sup>74</sup> have to teach the Christian Church today about its exegesis and hermeneutics? What tentative conclusions and speculative hypotheses can be drawn from this study? First, Origen reveals both the importance and the inadequacy of loyalty to the living interpretative tradition of the Church in the creation of sound exegesis. Origen's commitment as a churchman to the "discipline of the Church" and the "rule of the Gospels" prevents him from sacrificing history to cosmology and thus taking the final fatal step into Gnosticism. Nevertheless, the teaching of the Church through its living tradition of biblical interpretation is not sufficient to prevent his allegorical flights of exegetical fancy. Contemporary biblical exegesis must recognize the value of commitment to the Church and its interpretative traditions, while avoiding the reliance upon confessional orthodoxy as sufficient protection from exegetical error.

Second, Origen's rigid, narrow view of the *sensus literalis* of Scripture — often to the point of wooden literalism and disparagement — drives him to abandon too quickly the grammatical and historical sense of the text as possibilities in themselves for "spiritual meaning." The text loses its capacity to exercise hermeneutical control over interpretation through its literal sense. A revitalized understanding of the *sensus literalis*, which seeks to unite grammatical, historical, and theological meanings at the primary textual level, is an urgent need of contemporary exegesis. The recent crisis in the historical-critical approach to modern biblical study and the current ferment in biblical theology point to the urgent need for such an exegetical model.

Third, Origen's exegesis dramatizes the dangers of moving from traditional typological to allegorical exegesis. (One might even venture the ironic observation that it took the Western Church thirteen hundred years and a Reformation to deal with some of the dangers of allegorism.) The loss of historical connection in modern biblical interpretation is not expressed in the shift from typology to allegory, but in the ignorance — and at times even disparagement — of "pre-critical" biblical interpretation. Contemporary exegetical methodology must take seriously the whole history of exegesis, as well as the pre-canonical tradition history of the text and its current literary form.

Finally, Origen's view of verbal inspiration with its resulting forced allegorism offers a solemn warning to those who rely upon a theory

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<sup>74</sup>Wiles, "Origen," p. 489.

of biblical inspiration as a guarantor of doctrinal orthodoxy. Theories of inspiration without adequate exegetical methodology can drive the interpreter, no matter how brilliant or committed he or she may be, into the wilderness of eisegesis and heresy amidst false assurances of orthodoxy.

Thus, Origen's exegesis teaches that neither reliance upon the Church and its interpretative tradition nor dependence upon a view of biblical inspiration is sufficient to guarantee sound biblical exegesis. An exegetical method which acknowledges the authority of both Scripture and the Church, as expressed in the *sensus literalis* of Scripture and the historical connectedness of interpretative tradition, may find itself also better able to receive the *testimonium internum Spiritus Sancti*.

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authors in this volume, it is disappointing that they missed important listings of such authors as Georges Florovsky, John Karmiris, Athenagoras Kokkinakis, Sergius Bulgakov, John Zizioulas, John Romanides, and others who have made important contributions to the Orthodox discussion on the Church. In spite of this shortcoming, this work is important for the study and research on the Church, and for this we are indebted to the authors.

The bibliographic form is consistent and helpful to the user for correct citations in writing and research. I highly recommend this bibliography to scholars, students, interested lay people, and parish libraries. Moreover, the volume is an excellent tool for interested scholars and lay persons in their research of the Church and its function in our contemporary world.

George C. Papademetriou  
*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*An Explorer of Realms of Art, Life, and Thought: A Survey of the Works of Philosopher and Theologian Constantine Cavarinos.* By John E. Rexine. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1985. Pp. 184.

The present volume is dedicated to the works of the distinguished Greek-American Orthodox philosopher-theologian, Professor Cavarinos. The editor, a distinguished author in his own right, presents some thirty-three works of Dr. Cavarinos published from 1949 to 1985. In the preface Dr. Rexine provides valuable biographical information on the author, the title pages of all the books published by Dr. Cavarinos, and the book reviews of these works written by Professor John Rexine. The volume also contains a complete list of the book reviews and articles published by Dr. Cavarinos. This provides an extremely valuable bibliography to the student of Greek-American Orthodoxy.

The volume is carefully written and is a welcome addition to the Orthodox literature in America. Hopefully, it will be an impetus to all the readers to learn about classical and modern thought, Byzantine culture and art, and especially the Orthodox experience reflected in the series of the Modern Orthodox Saints. Cavarinos' works on the Greek Orthodox Saints, holy Mount Athos, and Byzantine art provided the American scholarly and religious public valuable tools of

knowledge. He guided with his books the Orthodox readership with English translations of important lives of saints to act as guides for the faithful in the way of holiness and knowledge of their great religious heritage.

We congratulate Dr. John Rexine for providing us with such a comprehensive volume and congratulate him for his achievement. I recommend this excellent book to libraries to be used as a bibliographic reference, to scholars and especially to Orthodox Christians to learn about a prominent Greek-American Orthodox pious thinker and lead them to the study of his highly recommended books on Orthodox spirituality and life.

George C. Papademetriou  
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## Anastasios of Sinai, the *Hodegos*, and the Muslims

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SIDNEY H. GRIFFITH

JOHN OF DAMASCUS (D.C. 749) IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED TO BE the earliest Christian writer to take any doctrinal notice of Islam, thereby becoming the first in a long line of Byzantine polemical writers to rebut the religious claims of Muhammad, the Qur'an, and the Islamic way of life.<sup>1</sup> It appears, however, that Anastasios of Sinai anticipated John of Damascus by about a half century, albeit in a very hasty and schematic fashion. He clearly refers to the ideas of the Muslims about Jesus, son of Mary, in his *Hodegos*, or *Viae Dux*, a critical edition of which has recently appeared.<sup>2</sup> A consideration of the relevant passages of this work is the principal concern of the present essay.

### *Anastasios and the Arab Milieu*

What little is known of Anastasios' biography is soon told. He

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<sup>1</sup>See Daniel J. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam; the "Heresy of the Ishmaelites"* (Leiden, 1972); Adel-Théodore Khoury, *Les théologiens byzantins et l'islam: textes et auteurs (viii<sup>e</sup>-xiii<sup>e</sup> S)* (Louvain & Paris, 1969); *idem*, *Polémique byzantine contre Islam (viii<sup>e</sup>-xiii<sup>e</sup> S)* (Leiden, 1972); *idem*, "Apologétique byzantine contre Islam (viii<sup>e</sup>-xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle)," *Proche Orient Chrétien* 29 (1979) 242-300; 30 (1980) 132-74; N. M. Vapori (ed.), *Orthodox Christians and Muslims (The Greek Orthodox Theological Review)* 31 (1986).

<sup>2</sup>Karl-Heinz Uthemann, *Anastasii Sinaitae Viae Dux* (Corpus Christianorum, Series Graeca, 8; Leuven, 1981). For the most recent discussion of the *Hodegos*, with bibliography, see Anna D. Kartsonis, *Anastasis; the Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), pp. 40-67.

was active at the turn of the eighth century, as one learns from a line in one of his homilies, according to which twenty years had elapsed since the end of the Sixth Ecumenical Synod, i.e., Constantinople 3 (680-81).<sup>3</sup> In the *Hodegos*, he testifies to his state in life with these words, "I, Anastasios, a monk of the holy mountain, Sinai, confess . . ."<sup>4</sup> A little earlier in the same work he notifies the reader that since he is situated in a desert, he does not have access to the books of the teachers and the Fathers, with which to check his references. Accordingly, he requests the responsible reader to emend any errors he may discover.<sup>5</sup> Anastasios was nevertheless a traveller; he journeyed in Syria and Egypt on a mission to refute Monophysitism in all its forms and branches. As we shall see, among other things, he held Monophysitism, and particularly its Severan expression, to be responsible for the new errors of the Arabs, which the reader easily recognizes to be the teachings of the Qur'an. He was, therefore, in addition to being a monk, an itinerant controversialist in the Chalcedonian cause. In this respect his career, which antedates that of John of Damascus by some fifty years, bears a remarkable resemblance to the career of Theodore Abu Qurrah (d.c. 825), a monk of Mar Sabas Monastery who, a hundred years later, undertook almost the same journeys in the same cause; but this time the arguments were presented in Arabic.<sup>6</sup> All three of these Melkite scholars who lived under the rule of Islam wrote extensively in support of the doctrines of their Church, almost as if the new political reality of Islamic government required a summary re-statement of the truth claims of Christianity.

In addition to the *Hodegos*, some dozen other works are attributed to Anastasios in the manuscript tradition.<sup>7</sup> Most important among them in the context of the present discussion is a collection of

<sup>3</sup> "Sermo 3 in creationem hominis secundum imaginem Dei," PG 89.1156D.

<sup>4</sup> PG 89.188A; Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. 191.

<sup>5</sup> PG 89.160C; Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. 158.

<sup>6</sup> See Ignace Dick, "Un continuateur arabe de saint Jean Damascène: Theodore Abuqurra, évêque melkite de Harran," *Proche Orient Chrétien* 12 (1962) 209-23, 319-32; 13 (1963) 114-29.

<sup>7</sup> See Hans-Georg Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur im byzantinischen Reich* (Munich, 1959), pp. 442-46. Many of the Greek works ascribed to Anastasios are available in PG, vol. 89.



*Interrogationes et Responsiones*,<sup>8</sup> a commentary on Psalm 6,<sup>9</sup> and a Good Friday sermon, which has so far been published only in an Arabic version and a German translation.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have only recently begun the systematic examination of the works of Anastasios, notably in the studies of Richard and Uthemann. Nevertheless, the work done so far, while far from comprehensive, yet allows the present-day reader to gain some impression of Anastasios' awareness of the religious ideas of the newly triumphant Arabs. Before examining these ideas, however, it is important to take notice of one more report that pertains to Anastasios' biography.

In his *Annales*, or general history of the world down to his own times, which the Melkite patriarch Eutychios of Alexandria (877-940) wrote in Arabic for the benefit of Christians living under the rule of Islam, there is a brief notice about Anastasios of Sinai. Eutychios identifies him with the general Mahan/Βαανής who commanded the Emperor Heraklios' troops during the failed attempt to save Syria/Palestine from the invading Arabs. After the defeat, says Eutychios, Mahan fled to Mount Sinai, became a monk, and took the name, Anastasios. Here is Eutychios' report:

As for Mahan, he was afraid to return to the king, Heraklios; so he could kill him. So he fled to Mount Sinai, became a monk, and took for himself the name, Anastasios. He was the author of a treatise in which he commented on the sixth of

<sup>8</sup>PG 89.311-824. The MS tradition for this work is complicated. See Marcel Richard, "Les véritables 'Questions et Réponses' d'Anastase le sinaïte," *Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes; Bulletin* 15 (1967-1968) 39-56. A critical edition of Anastasios' original work is to appear at the hands of J. Munitiz. See Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. ccxiii, n. 56.

<sup>9</sup>There are two recensions of the Greek commentary on Psalm 6 in PG 89.1077-1144. There is a Syriac version preserved in Vatican Syriac MS 369, ff. 104r.-183n. See Anton Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* (Bonn, 1922), p. 262 and n. 14. An Arabic version is preserved in one of the earliest dated Christian Arabic MSS, viz., Vatican Arabic MS 71, written in the year 885. See Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur* (5 vols., Citta del Vaticano, 1944-1953), 1, p. 375. On this MS, see S. H. Griffith, "Anthony David of Baghdad, Scribe and Monk of Mar Sabas," to appear.

<sup>10</sup>L. Cheikho, "A Lost Treatise of St. Anastasius of Sinai" [Arabic], *al-Machriq* 15 (1912) 274-80; *idem*, "Eine verlorene Homilie des heiligen Anastasius von Sinai," *Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift* 65 (1912) 780-95.

David's psalms.<sup>11</sup>

It is clear from his mention of the commentary on the sixth psalm that Eutychios intends to identify Mahan with the Anastasios of Sinai whom one knows as the author of the *Hodegos*. Among modern scholars, Jean Maspero, for one, found this identification of Mahan with Anastasios of Sinai to be "une invraisemblance grossière,"<sup>12</sup> citing to the contrary Michael the Syrian's report that Βαανής was killed along with forty thousand Byzantine troops at the battle of the Yarmuk.<sup>13</sup> However, there is also a report in the *Chronography* of Theophanes (d. 818) to the effect that not only was Βαανής not killed in that battle, but that his troops proclaimed him emperor, and foreswore their allegiance to Heraklios.<sup>14</sup> There could surely be no better reason than this one for Mahan/Βαανής to have fled in fear of his life to Mount Sinai, where the Muslims seem already to have been in power. As for the improbability of a disgraced general becoming a scholar-monk, one can at least say that it is not impossible. Here, of course, is not the place to pursue this issue in detail, beyond noting that Maspero may have been too hasty in immediately rejecting the credibility of the story.<sup>15</sup>

Anastasios' commentary on Psalm 6 was obviously popular among the Arabic speaking Christians of later times, as the early date of its translation into Arabic and its special mention by Eutychios prove. The reason for this popularity is not difficult to discover. The Psalm

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<sup>11</sup>L. Cheikho, *et al.*, *Eutychii Patriarchae Alexandrini Annales* (CSCO, vols. 50 & 51; Paris, 1906 & 1909), 51, p. 15.

<sup>12</sup>Jean Maspero, *Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie depuis la Mort de l'Empereur Anastase jusqu'à la Reconciliation des Églises Jacobites* (Paris, 1923), p. 337.

<sup>13</sup>See J.-B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel le Syrien; patriarche jacobite d'Antioche (1166-1199)* (4 vols.; Paris, 1899-1910), 2, p. 421; 4, p. 416.

<sup>14</sup>C. De Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia* (2 vols.; Lipsiae, 1883 & 1885), 1, p. 338.

<sup>15</sup>The matter is indeed confusing in the sources. Bar Hebraeus, for example, says nothing about the death of Mahan at Yarmuk, but reports that he was the general of the army of the Romans when the Muslims defeated them at Hims, killing forty thousand men. See *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Syriacum* (Paris, 1890), p. 101. Muslim Arabic sources report that Khalid ibn Walid pursued Mahan after the battle at Yarmuk, and caught up with him at Hims, where he was killed. See Fred McGraw Donner, *The Early Islamic Conquests* (Princeton, 1981), p. 142.

itself is a prayer in a time of distress, which ends on the hopeful note that God will at length scatter the suppliant's oppressors. Anastasios' commentary is in fact a plea to his readers to convert and to do penance, and to ask forgiveness for their sins. He cites a number of instances of successful repentance from previous biblical and ecclesiastical history. Anastasios' conviction, as expressed in this Psalm commentary, seems to have been that the invasion of the Muslim Arabs was a punishment from God on account of the sinfulness of the people, and particularly for the sin of the Emperor Heraklios' espousal of what Anastasios regarded as the shameful heresy of Monotheletism.

In his Homily 3, Anastasios explicitly tied the Arab conquest to the exile of Pope Martin I (d. 655) at the hands of the Emperor, Constans II (641-48), because of the pope's resistance both to Heraklios' *Ecthesis* and to Constans' *Typos*, both of which effectively supported Monotheletism. Anastasios said,

When Heraklios died, Martin was exiled by Heraklios' grandson, and instantly the desert dweller, Amalek, rose up to strike us, Christ's people.<sup>16</sup>

Anastasios' Good Friday homily, which comments on the successive verses of Psalm 2, is in fact a strong indictment of the Jews for the crucifixion of Jesus. This theme, while it had long been a staple item in Good Friday oratory, came into a period of renewed emphasis among Christians at the dawn of the seventh century, with a crescendo of anti-Jewish polemic, due in all likelihood to the new Jewish freedom to challenge Christian beliefs and practices, which came with the successful Persian invasions of Syria/Palestine and Egypt in the early years of the century, and which was sustained when the Muslims came into power, on the very heels of the Persians.<sup>17</sup> Outward signs

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<sup>16</sup>PG 89.1156C. Amalek was the name given in the Bible to tribes living in the Negev, south to Sinai, who were constant enemies of the Israelites to the time of David. The fact that Anastasios refers to the Muslims as "Amalekites" as opposed to "Ishmaelites," the designation for Muslims most commonly used in later Greek texts, is indicative of the early stage of Christian reflection on Islam. It is also indicative of the early conversion of the Arabs of Sinai to Islam. It is not likely that the name is a garbled Arab name, as Walter Kaegi suggested in his "Initial Byzantine Reactions to the Arab Conquest," *Church History* 38 (1969) 142-43.

<sup>17</sup>See Sidney H. Griffith, "Jews and Muslims in Christian Syriac and Arabic Texts of the Ninth Century C.E.," to appear.

of Christian beliefs such as the cross and icons became particular targets of this Jewish polemic, which in turn elicited a spirited Christian defense. The *Adversus Judaeos* homily of Leontios of Neapolis (d.c. 650), a generation ahead of Anastasios, was perhaps the first to sound this new note of attack, pointing out that all Christians bow down to the cross as to the holiest of all memorials of Jesus Christ.<sup>18</sup> Under Muslim rule, this issue would come to the fore again as a major item of controversy between Jews, Muslims, and Christians.<sup>19</sup>

Although it is true to say that at the time of the Muslim conquest Anastasios was principally concerned with heresies and divisions within the Church, which divisions, as we have seen, he blamed for the conquest, he did nevertheless pay some scant attention to the religious beliefs of the invaders themselves. His observations are for the most part recorded in the *Hodegos*. However, one finds chance mention of them elsewhere in his works, and particularly in the *Interrogationes et Responsiones*. There is a striking instance in Question 126, a question which, according to Marcel Richard's manuscript studies, was part of the original work which one should unhesitatingly ascribe to Anastasios of Sinai.<sup>20</sup> The Question is: "Some want to say that Satan fell on account of not bowing down to the man (i.e., to Adam)." Anastasios answers, "Such as these are the myths of the Greeks and the Arabs,"<sup>21</sup> and he goes on to argue, on the basis of a reference to Ezekiel, that Satan fell before Adam was created. However, what

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<sup>18</sup>See PG 93.1600A. On this homily, see Norman H. Baynes, "The Icons Before Iconoclasm," *Harvard Theological Review* 44 (1951) 93-106. In the manuscript tradition a *Disputatio Adversus Judaeos* is also accredited to Anastasios of Sinai, in PG 89.1203-32. Here too the symbol of the cross is discussed. Anastasios asks why the Jew will accept only a coin with the figure of the cross on it (col. 1240)? Also the question of bowing down to crosses and images is raised (cols. 1233-35). However, modern scholars seriously doubt the authenticity of this work, dating it rather to the ninth century. See Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 443 and n. 2.

<sup>19</sup>See Sidney H. Griffith, "Theodore Abu Qurrah's Arabic Tract on the Christian Practice of Venerating Images," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105 (1985) 53-73; Robert Schick, "The Fate of the Christians in Palestine During the Byzantine/Umayyad Transition, 600-750 A.D.," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, the University of Chicago, Chicago, 1987).

<sup>20</sup>See Richard, "Les veritables 'Questions,'" pp. 41 and 48.

<sup>21</sup>PG 89.776B,C.

instantly occurs to the modern reader is the Qur'an's teaching on the subject: "When we said to the angels, 'Bow down to Adam,' they bowed down, except Iblis. He refused and he behaved arrogantly, and came to be among the unbelievers" (*al-Baqarah* (2).34). Clearly Anastasios made a correct attribution of this notion to the Arabs, i.e., the Muslims, and by Greeks he probably means no more than "gentiles," or "pagans," a well-documented sense of the word "Hellenoi."<sup>22</sup> Together the terms could be taken to mean simply "pagan Arabs," an epithet that Christian writers would later commonly use to designate Muslims.<sup>23</sup>

Admittedly, the beliefs of the Arabs were not primary concerns for Anastasios. Even in the *Interrogationes*, when he mentions non-Christians in a context in which one might expect to find him speaking of Arabs or Muslims, he mentions only "unbelievers" (ἄπιστοι). For example, Question 79 asks if an unbeliever, Jew, or Samaritan does good deeds, will he enter the kingdom of heaven?<sup>24</sup> Question 110 asks, "If our rulers are Jews, unbelievers, or heretics, is it necessary to pray for them in church, or not?"<sup>25</sup> The ruling Arabs of Anastasios' lifetime, i.e., the Muslims, may well be the unbelievers to which the questions refer, but clearly the point cannot be pressed.

### *The Hodegos and the "False Notions" of the Arabs*

In what Anastasios has to say about the beliefs of the Arabs in his major work, the *Hodegos*, he gives evidence of his knowledge of Islamic doctrines. Before citing these passages, however, it is important to mention that the book's main purpose is to refute Monophysitism. Arabs and their beliefs are mentioned here only incidentally to this principal objective, and then only as part and parcel of the argument against the Monophysites. In the judgment of Karl-Heinz Uthemann, Anastasios put together his *Hodegos* in Sinai, somewhere between the years 643 and 686/89, but probably before 681, the year of the Sixth Ecumenical Synod. Between 686 and 689 he added the

<sup>22</sup>See G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), p. 451.

<sup>23</sup>See Sidney H. Griffith, "The Prophet Muhammad, his Scripture and his Message According to the Christian Apologies in Syriac and Arabic from the First Abbasid Century," in T. Fahd (ed.), *Vie du prophète Mahomet* (Colloque de Strasbourg, 1980; Paris, 1983), pp. 99-146.

<sup>24</sup>PG 89.708.

<sup>25</sup>PG 89.764.

*scholia* that are now found scattered throughout the earlier compilation.<sup>26</sup>

The first mention of Arabs comes in the very first section of the book, in the preface in which Anastasios sets forth the reasons why it is necessary for him to undertake the enterprise before him. Having listed already ten reasons, Anastasios gives the following reason for composing his rather extensive guidebook to the faith:

Because, prior to any discussion at all, we must condemn however many false notions about us the opponent entertains, as when we set out to converse with Arabs we have first to condemn anyone who says, "Two gods," or anyone who says, "God has carnally begotten a son," or anyone who makes prostration as to God, to any creature whatever, in heaven or on earth. Likewise, in regard to the rest of the heresies, it is necessary first to condemn however many false opinions about the faith they have. For, giving heed to these things, they accept the rest more eagerly.<sup>27</sup>

The first thing to notice in this passage is that controversy (διαλέγεσθαι) with Arabs, and its already customary procedure, is put forward as an example of the procedure that Anastasios is proposing in his *Hodegos* as useful in the struggle with Monophysitism. Further, it is clear that what should first be rebutted, in Anastasios' view, are the false notions the opponent already harbors about one. He gives three examples of such notions, from what his reader is expected easily to recognize as false Arab notions about what Christians believe. On examination it quickly appears that these notions about Christians can be found in the Qur'an, to express Muhammad's criticism of Christian beliefs.

Already in the context of *surat an-Nahl* (16), which contains a clear rejection of the polytheism of the pagan Arabs, one finds the explicit injunction: "God said, 'Do not accept two gods. There is but a single God. So, fear me (vs. 51).'" Then, in the later *surah, al-Ma'idah* (5), precisely this language is used again to reject what Muhammad perceived to be the upshot of Christian preaching about Jesus, son of Mary. In the context of verses 109 to 114, where the Qur'an presents a fairly comprehensive sketch of the Islamic view of Jesus and his

<sup>26</sup>Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. ccxviii.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.* p. 9.

mission, and a threat of eternal punishment to any one of Jesus' followers who would later disbelieve (vs. 115), there is the description of a scene in which Jesus stands in judgment before God: "God said, 'O Jesus, son of Mary, did you tell people, 'Take me and my mother for two gods instead of God?' " (vs. 116).

Surely the standard Christian proclamation that Jesus is God, the son of God, and Mary his mother, is the mother of God, would have been sufficient to elicit the Qur'an's adverse judgment. One need not postulate the presence in Arabia of any fringe Christian sect to explain the critical reaction on Muhammad's part to Mary's Christian epithet, "Mother of God," an appellation particularly dear to Monophysite preachers. Anastasios was, therefore, perfectly correct to mention the proposition that there are two gods as an example of a false notion which the Arabs entertain about the Christians. Whoever among the Arabs who invaded Syria/Palestine, who had heard the Qur'an proclaimed, would certainly have thought, on the basis of *al-Ma'idah* (5).116, that Jesus' disbelieving followers taught that he and his mother were two gods. Accordingly, Anastasios reminds his reader, this is a false notion about Christians which one must condemn before engaging in conversation with Arabs.

The false Arab notion that what Christians believe involves God in the carnal generation of a son, also has its roots in the Qur'an. A constant feature of Muhammad's reaction against Christian teaching is the phrase, "They say God has taken a son; praised be he. Nay, whatever is in the heavens or on the earth is his, all are subservient to him" (*al-Baqarah* (2).116; and cf. *an-Nisa'* (4).171). Anastasios' very wording of this false Arab notion once again ties the rejection of a Christian doctrine in with the Qur'an's earlier rejection of pagan ideas, as in *al-An'am* (6).101, where the assumption that God has offspring is explicitly associated with the unacceptable notion that such a proposal would involve God with a female consort: "The Creator of heaven and earth — how does he have offspring? He did not have a female consort. He created everything." Clearly, then, in the Qur'an's view, to say that God has a son, or that Jesus Christ is God's son, involves God in a twofold impossibility: it posits Mary as God's consort; and Jesus and Mary as two gods instead of God. These are precisely the false notions about what Christians teach that Anastasios says one must clearly anathematize before arguing with Arabs.

In the Qur'an's view, as is already clear from the passages quoted above, e.g., in *al-Baqarah* (2).116, to make a prostration to Jesus, son of

Mary, as to God, would automatically involve one in the pagan worship of creatures. The Qur'an's constant admonition is: "The Lord of the heavens and the earth and what is between them, worship him, and be constant in worshipping him. Do you know of a namesake for him?" (*Maryam* (19).65. Accordingly, Anastasios notes that before arguing with Arabs, one must anathematize whoever worships any creature in heaven or on earth. It is a false notion of the Arabs, he proposes, that Christians are guilty of such misguided worship.

After the introduction to the *Hodegos*, where he states his reasons for composing the book, Anastasios next mentions the Arabs in chapter 7, a chapter in which his main business is to accuse the man whom he considers to have been the arch-heresiarch, the Monophysite Severos of Antioch (465-538), of having rejected the holy Fathers and of having set up teachers of no authority in their place. It is interesting to note that the Arabs figure in the list of those whose masters Anastasios accuses Severos of following. He says,

Severos has been a good pupil to the masters of the Jews, the Greeks, and the Arabs; in part accepting the holy scriptures, and in part rejecting them, just as the students of the Manichees also do.<sup>28</sup>

First of all, here the Arabs have joined the standard list of infidels in Anastasios' view, i.e., Jews, pagan Greeks, and Manichees. Heretofore, Arabs have appeared in Christian texts, not as the harbingers of an unacceptable and different system of thought, but merely as a geographical/cultural group of people who had a role to play in Christian history, deserving either praise or blame according to the writer's own position on the spectrum of Christian thought and life. Secondly, Anastasios accuses the Arabs of accepting the holy scriptures in part, and in part rejecting them.

In this connection one recalls the Qur'an's statement: "Say, we believe in God, and what has been sent down to us, and in what was sent down to Abraham, to Isma'il and Isaak and Jakob and the tribes; in what was brought to Moses, and Jesus, and what was brought to the prophets from their Lord. We do not make a distinction among any one of them" (*al-Baqarah* (2).136). In the general Christian view, of course, to accept all of these scriptures, but to reject the standard Christian doctrines about Jesus, son of Mary, however various and

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<sup>28</sup>Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. 113.



finely tuned the formulae of any one group of Christians may have been, was to reject the teaching of the scriptures. Anastasios thus becomes the earliest Christian writer to accuse the Muslims of accepting the scriptures only in part, like the Jews before them. This was to become a standard Christian response to Muslims in the following centuries.<sup>29</sup>

The third allusion to the teachings of the Muslims in Anastasios' *Hodegos* comes in chapter ten, in which the author is engaged in recounting a debate in which he participated in Alexandria, with some Monophysites of the Theodosian and Gaianite persuasion. He speaks of the followers of Severos of Antioch, and of their unwillingness to speak of two natures in Christ, and he says,

Whenever they hear "natures," they think they are shameful and outrageous things, the members which essentially go with the bodies of men and women. Thanks to this, they flee from such an expression, as if they were pupils of the Saracens. For these people, hearing the birth of God, or the generation of God, immediately thinking of marriage, blasphemously speak of insemination and carnal union.<sup>30</sup>

From what has already been said about the Islamic reaction to the Christian teaching about Jesus and Mary, one is prepared to recognize here Anastasios' awareness of the fact that Muslims have judged this teaching in very concrete terms. In a context rejecting any association of others with God, the Qur'an says: "Exalted is the glory of our Lord. He has not taken a female consort, nor any offspring" (*al-Jinn* (72).3). And *surat al-Ihlas* (112) states very pointedly about God: "He has not generated, and he has not been generated" (vs. 3). Of course, these statements were probably directed originally against polytheistic beliefs, but it was precisely in terms of his earlier judgments of Arabian polytheism that Muhammad evaluated and critiqued the doctrines of Christians.

What is even more important to notice in the present quotation from the *Hodegos* is that Anastasios expressly states that the Saracens come to the very concrete terms of their judgment in this matter when they hear people speak of the generation and birth of God. His

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<sup>29</sup>See Sidney H. Griffith, "The Prophet Muhammad."

<sup>30</sup>Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, pp. 169-70.

statement, therefore, is a testimony in support of the hypothesis that what the Qur'an has to say about Christian doctrines expresses a judgment of them, or a misunderstanding as Anastasios would have it, and is not simply a report about what certain groups of Christians believe.

Scholars have long recognized that the three passages cited here from Anastasios' *Hodegos* refer to Muslims, and to Islamic ideas about Christians.<sup>31</sup> However, Anastasios himself speaks only of "Arabs" and "Saracens." He nowhere explicitly names the prophet, Muhammad, the Qur'an, or even Islam as a distinct religious entity. What makes it virtually certain that the Arabs whose views Anastasios cites were Muslims is the fact that their distinctive religious ideas, as quoted here, are seen to be identical with what the Qur'an actually teaches, often in much the same vocabulary as in the Qur'an.

In the early period of their conquest and occupation of Syria/Palestine and Egypt, the victorious Arabs seem to have preferred not to call themselves "Muslims," but simply to use the term "the Believers" (*al-mu'minun*) to refer to themselves, following the preferred diction in the Qur'an.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore, even the Muslim military men of this early period seem to have thought of Islam simply as the religion of the Arabs.<sup>33</sup> And in this connection one will recall that in the Islamic view, the distinctive feature of the Qur'an as a book of revelation is precisely the fact that it is an Arabic Qur'an (e.g., *az-Zuhruf* (43).3). Anastasios' customary use of the term "Arabs," therefore, need not imply any doubt about the Islamic identity of the people to whom he refers. Once he uses the term "Saracens," in the passage quoted above from chapter ten of the *Hodegos*, but here again he is merely using a word for Arabs that was long popular with Greek writers, although its precise origins are not yet completely

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<sup>31</sup>See, e.g., M. Richard, "Anastase le sinaïte, l'*Hodegos* et le Monothélisme," *Revue des Études Byzantines* 15 (1957) 34-37. As Richard mentions, only Maspero, *Histoire des Patriarches*, p. 338, denied that Anastasios was discussing Muslims in these passages, and his objections have now been answered.

<sup>32</sup>The terms *islam*, *muslim*, *aslama* had been used in their technical sense since the second year of the *hijrah*. See R. Bell, *Introduction to the Quran* (Edinburgh, 1953), p. 108. However, the early community preferred to call themselves *al-mu'minun*. See W. M. Watt, "The Conception of *iman* in Islamic Theology," *Der Islam* 43 (1967) 1-10; F. M. Denny, "Some Religious-Communal Terms and Concepts in the Qur'an," *Numen* 24 (1977) 26-59.

<sup>33</sup>See C. Cahen, "Note sur l'accueil des chrétiens d'orient à l'islam," *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 166 (1964) 51-58.

understood.<sup>34</sup>

There are other passages in the *Hodegos* in which Anastasios rejects ideas that one knows are espoused by Muslims. For example, in a *scholion* in chapter thirteen he denies that Jesus performed any miracles as an infant, arguing that there is scriptural support for the position that he performed his first miracle at the wedding feast of Cana.<sup>35</sup> The Qur'an, however, reports two miracles in Jesus' infancy, viz., his talking in the cradle as an infant (*Maryam* (19).29; *Al 'Imran* (3).46), and his breathing life into clay birds (*Al 'Imran* (3).49), as a young child at play. There is no trace of the first miracle in Christian tradition, but the second one is found in a number of apocryphal writings.<sup>36</sup> Since Anastasios does not ascribe a belief in these miracles to the Arabs nor to anyone in particular, one cannot really argue that this *scholion* attests to his knowledge of the Qur'an.

There is one feature of the Qur'an's "Christology" that is surprisingly not mentioned at all in the *Hodegos*. This is the seeming rejection of the historical reality of the crucifixion of Jesus, in *an-Nisa'* (4).157. What makes this omission particularly surprising is that in chapter twelve of the *Hodegos*, Anastasios goes to great lengths to press home the Melkite insistence that on the cross Jesus Christ truly died in his human nature. To this end, he even provided for an image of the cross, maybe the crucifix, to be inscribed in the text of the *Hodegos*.<sup>37</sup> In connection with this feature of the book, art historians have been able to date a significant change in the iconography of the crucified Christ to the time of Anastasios, and even to the monastery of Sinai, viz., the earliest presentation of Christ dead on the cross, with his eyes closed, and crowned with a crown of thorns.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup>See J. S. Trimingham, *Christianity among the Arabs in Pre-Islamic Times* (London, 1979), pp. 312-13; Irfan Shahid, *Byzantium and the Arabs in the Fourth Century* (Washington, 1984), pp. 279-81.

<sup>35</sup>PG 89.229; Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, p. 238.

<sup>36</sup>See the references in G. C. Anawati, "'Isa,'" *EF*, vol. 4, p. 82.

<sup>37</sup>See Uthemann, *Viae Dux*, pp. 202-09.

<sup>38</sup>See H. Belting and C. Belting-Ihm, "Das Kreuzbild im 'Hodegos' des Anastasios Sinaites; ein Beitrag zur Frage nach der ältesten Darstellung des toten Crucifixus," in W. N. Schumacher (ed.), *Tortulae; Studien zu altchristlichen und byzantinischen Monumenten* (Rome, 1966), pp. 30-39. See also K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai, The Icons* (vol. 1, From the Sixth to the Tenth Century; Princeton, 1976), pp. 61-64, plate xxv; and now Kartsonis, *Anastasis*, pp. 40-67.

Moreover, the cross itself, and the image of Christ crucified, were later to become particularly significant occasions for controversy between Muslims and Christians.<sup>39</sup> Yet Anastasios makes no mention of Arabs in his rather extensive discussion of Christ on the cross; he makes no reference to any Islamic denial of the crucifixion.

The fact of Anastasios of Sinai's silence about any Arab or Islamic denial of the crucifixion of Christ is especially significant in the present context because the wording of the Qur'an's denial of the event is what some modern scholars have seized upon as evidence of a Christian docetist influence upon Muhammad.<sup>40</sup> The Qur'an's phrase is: "They neither killed him, nor did they crucify him, but it seemed so to them" (*an-Nisa'* (4).157. The Jews, the people to whom Jesus was sent in the Islamic view, are the subject of the first two verbs in this phrase. In context, the Qur'an is upbraiding the Jews for their treatment of the prophets, and for their boast, "We killed the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary" (vs. 157). In no way does the verse intend to report Christian views, nor to criticize Christian doctrines. What has led some scholars to find docetic influences in it is the enigma of the Arabic phrase, "walakin shubbiha lahum," which is translated above, "but it seemed so to them." The phrase can also be interpreted, "only a likeness of that was shown to them," and it is this possibility, along with the tendency among Muslim interpreters to propose that a proxy was crucified in Jesus' place, that has led scholars to compare this notion with various Christian docetic doctrines, in an effort to discover what could have prompted Muhammad and the

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<sup>39</sup>Among the earliest records of the particular antipathy of the "Saracens" to the cross is a report which comes from the pen of another monk named Anastasios, who presumably flourished a generation earlier than the author of the *Hodegos*, and who discussed the experiences of the monks of Sinai. See F. Nau, "Le texte grec des récits du moine Anastase sur les saints pères du Sinai," *Oriens Christianus* 2 (1902), 82. On this Anastasios, see Beck, *Kirche und theologische Literatur*, p. 464. For the later Christian/Muslim controversy, see Sidney H. Griffith, "Jews and Muslims," n. 17 above, and "Theodore Abu Qurrah's Arabic Tract," n. 19 above.

<sup>40</sup>See in particular H. Grégoire, "Mahomet et le Monophysisme," in *Mélanges Charles Diehl* (vol. 1; Paris, 1930), pp. 107-19; J. Jarry, "La Sourate IV et les soi-disant origines Julianistes de l'Islam," *Annales Islamologiques* 9 (1970) 1-7. See also J. Moorhead, "The Monophysite Response to the Arab Invasions," *Byzantion* 51 (1981) 579-91.

Qur'an to speak in this way.<sup>41</sup> Suffice it to say that certainly by the first Abbasid century, Muslims were claiming that Jesus was not in fact crucified, and this allegation became a constant topic in Christian/Muslim controversies.<sup>42</sup>

The fact that Anastasios is silent about any Arab claim that Jesus was not crucified does not necessarily mean that Muslims in the eighth century did not already interpret the Qur'an to this effect, nor does it mean that Anastasios did not know of their unique ideas on the subject. What his silence does mean is simply that Anastasios found no use for this topic in his polemic against the Monophysites.

### *The Hodegos, the Muslims and the Qur'an*

The foregoing survey of the passages in the *Hodegos*, and in several other works in which Anastasios of Sinai refers to Arabs, to their customs and beliefs, furnishes all that can be found in his writings that might refer to Islam. It is not much, and it is clear that in no place does Anastasios intend to concentrate on the Arabs and their religion. Rather, he refers to them only in passing, to make an appeal to something familiar to his readers, for the purpose of advancing his own arguments in defense of Orthodoxy, against Monophysites and Monothelites. It is the modern reader, looking back over the works of Anastasios, with the Muslims and the teachings of the Qur'an in mind, who notices that references to them can be seen in what Anastasios says about the Arabs — a fact that makes him perhaps the earliest Christian writer in Greek to leave behind some description of the early Islamic community. That what Anastasios said about the beliefs of the Arabs reflects Islamic teaching is verified by the identity of these beliefs with ideas found in the Qur'an. The fact that Anastasios compiled his *Hodegos* for the purpose of refuting Monophysite teachings, and not in any way for the purpose of assessing or refuting Islamic ideas, simply means that his remarks about the Arabs are only incidental to his project. He mentioned the religious ideas of the Arabs in order to argue *ad verecundiam* against Monophysites. Accordingly, he presented these Islamic ideas as facts

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<sup>41</sup>For the Islamic point of view, see the survey in Anawati, "Isa," pp. 83-84; G. Parrinder, *Jesus in the Qur'an* (London, 1965), pp. 105-21; K. Cragg, *Jesus and the Muslim; an Exploration* (London, 1985); R. Arnaldez, *Jesus fils de Marie, prophète de l'Islam* (Paris, 1980).

<sup>42</sup>See n. 39 above.

presumed to be well known to his readers, and requiring no further elaboration on his part.

It is important to remember that in the introduction to the *Hodegos* Anastasios presents the Arab ideas that are to be rejected as false opinions about the Christian faith which the Arabs entertain. In chapter ten he says explicitly that the Arabs put forward these ideas when they hear the statement of Christian doctrines. Given the congruence of these Arab ideas with the criticisms of Christian doctrines found in the Qur'an, it makes most sense to conclude that Anastasios is in fact reflecting the teaching of the Qur'an when he mentions what the Arabs say about Christian doctrines. And it is pertinent that he mentions these Arab ideas in a work directed against the Monophysites, because the Qur'an's criticisms of Christianity make most sense as criticisms when one recalls the likelihood that they were initially directed against the Monophysite expression of the Christian creed.<sup>43</sup> This circumstance, of course, is what makes the Arab ideas worth mentioning in Anastasios' polemic against the Monophysites.

The perception of recognizable Islamic and Qur'anic teaching in the ideas Anastasios ascribes to the Arabs means that these ideas, and probably the Qur'an in which they were expressed, were well developed and widespread among the conquering Arabs by the second half of the seventh century. Anastasios' more or less off-hand references to Arabs, therefore, become valuable bits of evidence for the historian who wants to gain insight into the world of early Islam.

It has become fashionable recently, as an experiment in historiography, to present early Islam in the profile of it that emerges from reports appearing in non-Islamic, largely Christian sources. The procedure is based on a systematic doubt of the veracity of any Islamic document to do with the early period, an example of which in any event cannot be found from earlier than the late seventh century. Consequently, the researcher, having rejected the Islamic sources as biased, reflecting a later apologetic agenda, is freed to construe the fragmentary Christian reports about Islam into whatever shape one might find appealing, depending upon one's ideological moorings,

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<sup>43</sup>Cf., e.g., Bowman, *art. cit.*, n. 10 above; Trimmingham, *Christianity among the Arabs*, pp. 163-70; 288-89. For further bibliography, cf. W. Hage, *Die syrisch-jakobitische Kirche in frühislamischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1966), pp. 48-49. The literature discusses the many traces and hints of Muhammad's encounters with Christian groups, reported in later Islamic literature.

and the documentary fragments at hand. Following this procedure, Michael Cook and Patricia Crone, for example, have postulated the existence of a hitherto unknown "Judeo-Hagarism" to account for early "Islam," which they say flourished in the early seventh century.<sup>44</sup> This Hagarism seems to have been a hybrid Judaism, consisting of Samaritan, even "Kenite" elements, which, once postulated into being, can then be credited with scriptures of its own, and even prophets. These Hagarenes, according to their discoverers, owed a heavy debt to the Jewish Christians, many of whose earlier ideas (fourth century) about Jesus and the Gospel, bear a close resemblance to ideas that are expressed in the Qur'an and that were also voiced by later Islamic scholars such as 'Abd al-Jabbar (d. 1025), the famous Mu'tazilite systematician, in his criticisms of Christian doctrines.<sup>45</sup> This coincidence of ideas about Jesus, between persons whose lives are separated by some centuries and who have some vocabulary in common, should not be surprising in that they both disclaimed any divinity in association with him, and then took this premise to its logical conclusion. Nevertheless, since it seems to be axiomatic in the "Hagarene" school of thought to deny that any Muslim, beginning with Muhammad, could have expressed an original religious idea which he did not copy from someone else, Patricia Crone, following Shlomo Pines, has now suggested that there was a surviving group of Jewish Christians in eleventh-century Persia who may be said to have tutored 'Abd al-Gabbar in Jewish Christian Christology.<sup>46</sup>

The question to be addressed now is what do Anastasios of Sinai's few remarks about the beliefs of the Arabs have to say about the shape of Islam and of the Qur'an in the second half of the seventh century? It seems evident that the notions which Anastasios attributes to the Arabs in his *Hodegos*, and once in his *Interrogationes et Responsiones*, are ideas that are in fact espoused in the Qur'an. It is also evident that Anastasios did not quote directly from the Qur'an, nor did he mention it. Rather, he mentions only the beliefs of the Arabs to

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<sup>44</sup>Cf. Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism, the Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge, 1977). Cf. Patricia Crone's defense of the methodology employed here in the introduction to her *Slaves on Horses* (Cambridge, 1980).

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Patricia Crone, "Islam, Judeo-Christianity and Byzantine Iconoclasm," *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam* 2 (1980) 59-95.

<sup>46</sup>Cf. Crone and Cook, *Hagarism*, pp. 3, 17-18. The authors make no mention of the reports of Anastasios of Sinai which are under discussion in the present essay.

do with what they took certain characteristic Christian doctrinal formulae to mean. However, since these Arab beliefs are in fact espoused in the Qur'an, it does not seem to strain credulity to propose that the Arabs of Anastasios' acquaintance learned their beliefs from the preaching of the Qur'an. This supposition does not necessarily entail the assumption that these Arabs had the Qur'an easily available in writing. It necessarily means only that they heard the Qur'an recited. And the fact that Anastasios' reports are accurate Islamic ideas in some detail means that they can be cited as evidence for the presence and influence of these Qur'anic ideas in Syria/Palestine before the year 681, the *terminus ante quem* for the compilation of the first edition of Anastasios' *Hodegos*. This dating puts Anastasios' reports somewhat earlier than the earliest surviving Islamic quotation from the Qur'an, viz., the inscriptions involved with the caliph 'Abd al-Malik's (685-705) Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem.<sup>47</sup> The most reasonably concrete construction to put upon this evidence is that by the time when Anastasios was writing his *Hodegos*, the Qur'an was already substantially in the form in which we presently have it, with the corollary that it must also have been in existence for some time previously for Anastasios to have been able to acquire such an adequate idea of some of its teachings and to put them forward as common knowledge about what the Arabs believe about Christian doctrines. The fact that Anastasios' reports about these Arabs appear in a work to which they are at best incidental and adventitious is itself a *suasio* in favor of their accuracy.

Cook and Crone did not mention Anastasios of Sinai's references to Arab beliefs in their survey of Christian reports about early Islam. It is the present writer's contention that Anastasios' references can best be construed as evidences of recognizably Islamic ideas. Consequently, they may also be considered as evidence of the prevalence of the Qur'an in the Arab world already in the second third of the seventh century. To put any other construction on the evidence would be to put a greater strain on credulity. Into the bargain, Anastasios of Sinai becomes the earliest Christian writer in Greek to take notice of the teachings of Islam, albeit that he saw them only as the peculiar religious ideas of the Arabs.

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<sup>47</sup>See Oleg Grabar, "The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem," *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959) 33-59, reprinted in the author's *Studies in Medieval Islamic Art* (London, 1976); C. Kessler, "'Abd al-Malik's Inscription in the Dome of the Rock: a Reconsideration," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1970) 2-14.



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## BEM and Orthodox Spirituality

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### BISHOP CHRYSOSTOMOS OF OREOI

THE PLENARY COMMISSION ON FAITH AND ORDER OF THE WORLD Council of Churches, meeting in Lima, Peru in January of 1982, adopted a significant inter-faith paper on Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry (the so-called "Lima Document" or "BEM"). At the recommendation of the WCC at its Vancouver assembly in 1983, the Orthodox Task Force of the WCC and the Faith and Order Commission arranged a meeting of various Orthodox and Oriental church leaders to discuss the Orthodox reception of the BEM document. This meeting was held in June 1985 at Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts. The papers and discussions resulting from this meeting appeared in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* (Vol. 30, no. 2, 1985) and constitute the most extensive collection of reactions by the Eastern Christian community to the Lima Document. It is to this body of material that I would like to address a few remarks about baptism, the eucharist, and the Church's ministry or priesthood. I hope that my remarks, offered from a somewhat conservative viewpoint — one not always fairly presented or adequately represented in ecumenical dialogues these days — will offer at least an opportunity for new thoughts or different insights.

As a traditionalist Orthodox believer, it often strikes me that we Orthodox enter ecumenical dialogue with a rather jaundiced view of our positions. Some years ago Christos Yannaras,<sup>1</sup> in an article which did little to gain him warm friends among his contemporary colleagues in Greek Orthodox theological circles, pointed out that

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<sup>1</sup>Christos Yannaras, "Theology in Present-Day Greece," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, 16 (1972) 200f.

Orthodox too often react to Western theological systematics with a sense of inferiority about the Eastern Christian theological scheme, leading to self-denigration and an almost obsequious attention to sometimes unwarranted Western criticism of Orthodox theological traditions. The end result of this is that our theologians at times end up not "position-taking" but "position-defending." The consequent loss to the Orthodox witness is one of precision and of a careful exposition of the unique Orthodox view. Simultaneously, there is created an atmosphere of vulnerability among Orthodox thinkers that would lead even the most benign observer to wonder just what the late Father Georges Florovsky meant when he envisioned the role of the Orthodox Church in the ecumenical movement as that of the standard of Christianity reaching out beyond its own perimeters to touch the heterodox religious world. Such a vision is greatly compromised by self-criticism that borders on self-abnegation. Not a little of this can be seen in certain of the Brookline documents and the Eastern Christian response to BEM.

As a corollary to Yannaras' now-dated, though still partly applicable, observation about Orthodox theologians, I would also note that many Orthodox theologians have failed to heed the words of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, addressed to an overly-scholastic age of Russian theologians who not only quivered before the West, but often embraced it in an attempt to restore stability to a trembling sense of theological derangement that beset eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Russian Orthodoxy:

Not a great deal can one expect from reliance on his personal philosophical reasoning for subjects not found in mundane life. It is more proper to follow divine revelation and the explications for such given by people who have prayed, labored, and purified their inner and outer lives more than we. In those whose souls are closer to heaven than our own, the image of God is more obvious and their insight clearer.

In short, the "Western captivity" still exists, however uncomfortable we may be with such an admission. As did Aischylos, we must see that our learning will come with the suffering afforded by humble recognition of our limitations, that "... wisdom will come to us by the awesome grace of God." We must see that our theology still falls short of that blending of personal spirituality and intellectual exposition

which marks the great apologists and confessors of the Orthodox faith. In much of the material outlining the Orthodox response to BEM, this shortcoming is overwhelmingly obvious. Reacting to Western systematic notions, many of the Orthodox responses retreat into a profound negativity about the Orthodox witness, fail to justify much of the Orthodox *lex orandi* in Western categories (since this cannot, in fact, be done), and almost wholly ignore the spiritual traditions which underlie the apparent informality and non-systematic nature of the Orthodox theological witness.

The great challenge of BEM and the ecumenical movement in general, with regard to the Orthodox Church and Eastern Christians, is that of regaining adequate self-knowledge. A popular ditty tells us:

We that acquaint ourselves with every zone  
And pass both tropics and behold the poles,  
When we come home are to ourselves unknown,  
And unacquainted still with our own souls.<sup>2</sup>

We Orthodox have not returned to the patristic soul of our Church, despite several decades of patristic revivalism and much talk about spirituality. Just recently, I was asked to comment on an area of dogmatic theology, with the specific task of separating teachings in the standard dogmatic texts from various “*theologoumena*,” or privately-held, though possibly accurate, views held by some Fathers. In the course of offering my comments, it occurred to me that we Orthodox all too frequently reify the various scholarly devices that help us to sort out patristic thought on some subject of theological concern. There really are no such things as “standard dogmatics texts”; nor, indeed, do *theologoumena* exist as such. Within the discipline of comparative patristics, which demands wide and exhaustive reading, we can posit that some ideas are “low in literature,” as social scientific jargon would have it, but we can never flatly state that they are outside the realm of revealed dogma. Nor, indeed, are the *dogmata* themselves revealed in composite texts. They emerge, rather, from a kind of “patristic consensus,” as Father Florovsky calls it, with regard to certain issues. There is no “Baltimore Catechism” of Orthodox dogmas. Confessional statements designed to provide Orthodox answers to problematic areas in Western theology (such as those

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<sup>2</sup>John Davies, *Nosce Teipsum*.

written during the Protestant Reformation) notwithstanding, the Orthodox Church really does not approach even the sacramental life in what the West would call a “dogmatic” fashion. Were this not the case, in fact, some “philosopher of theology” would find in our arbitrary distinction between dogmas and *theologoumena* that bothersome *homunculus* of the scientific world, this time carefully sorting out the supposed chaff and dross of the Orthodox faith from the seed of truth. Actually, all Orthodox studies call us to a thorough, careful search of the Fathers and to an existential immersion into their spirits — to something that ultimately rises above the useful tools of research that we have borrowed largely from Western theological schemata. Indeed, some of the Orthodox responses to the Lima Document show a clear misunderstanding of the spiritual traditions which must underlie any discussion of the Orthodox ministry and life in the mysteries. There is still too little reading in the Fathers and too little patristic elucidation. We must constantly and humbly admit such inadequacies and turn to the Fathers, to those souls that “are closer to heaven than our own,” to form a patristic synthesis that truly expresses the Orthodox spirit and ethos and that reveals accurate knowledge of what we are.

In my few comments below, by no means do I wish to present a patristic response to every issue that the Orthodox responses to BEM entail. I simply wish to offer a few insights gleaned from my own readings from the Fathers in the broad areas of baptism, the eucharist, and the ministry *vis-à-vis* the heterodox; the function of baptism, the eucharist, and the ministry within the Orthodox Church; and the spiritual priorities of the Orthodox Church as they emerge from discussions of BEM. As I have noted, these insights I offer in a heuristic spirit from a corner of the Church which is not always heard or whose thoughts are often ill-treated by those of a reformist spirit or by traditionalists who themselves, in a spirit of overstatement, ill serve their own positions.

With regard to baptism, the eucharist, and ministry outside the Orthodox Church, it is imperative that we regain a certain spiritual perspective which many of the Orthodox responses to Lima lack. We might initially approach the matter by emphasizing that the very juxtaposition of baptism, the eucharist, and the ministry as inclusive areas of theological concern is, to the Orthodox Christian, an artificial one. One cannot understand a single mystery of the Church — and here we are frankly talking about the sacramental acts of baptism,

communion, and ordination, to use proper Orthodox nomenclature — either in terms of its content and form or in terms of its function, without understanding the spiritual *Gestalt* which the whole sacramental life forms. One might even argue, along with Saint Basil the hierarch, that the ecclesiological formulae by which we circumscribe the boundaries of the Church itself are bound up in the wholeness of life within the mysteries. In responding to BEM, our Orthodox observers must be constantly aware that the unity of life in the Church does not allow for an artificial separation of the elements of the Church's mosaic into areas of singular concern. For the Western Christian, pastoral, liturgical, and organizational issues can constitute self-standing and integrated sub-areas of theological discourse. To the Orthodox Christian, as evidenced by the patristic witness, there is a spiritual wholeness of such substance that one grasps the very status and function of any single aspect of theological concern only from the integrated *Überansicht* afforded within the vision of such wholeness.

Baptism, in the Orthodox spiritual tradition, is not simply entry into the church community or congregation as such, into the "*koinotes ton piston*," but also into a kind of spiritual *communion*, into the "*koinonia ton piston kai tes pisteos*," which binds together both the Church above and the Church below; indeed, the newly-baptized Christian is, to quote the prayers of the catechumenate, written "*en biblio zoes*" and united to the flock of those who inherit the things of God ("... *henoson auton te poimne tes kleronomias sou* . . ."). Indeed, the entire experience of baptism in the Orthodox tradition has no universal focus, such as the forgiveness of original sin and the entry of an individual into the Christian *oikoumene* (in fact, these are rather sparsely cited in the baptismal texts), but rather intensely draws the candidate's attention to a personal struggle, within the confined limits of the Orthodox Church itself, with the power of the devil for the liberation of the soul and its union with God. Throughout the service of baptism, this theme is repeated and emphasized. In short, Orthodox baptism entails an entry into a community of believers who have made it their common goal to combat the wiles of the Evil One in the ancient ways placed before us by the living tradition of the Church. Baptism provides us with a spiritual rudder, sacred Tradition (which too often is misunderstood as an anchor), by which we engage in an effort to guide ourselves through the mirky waters of sin on the very Ark of Salvation, the Church of Christ. This special notion of baptism in the Orthodox Church obviously places it in a

context far removed from that of the Western confessions, and especially the reformed (Calvinistic) groups, in which (a legacy from Latin Christian tradition as old as Augustinian thought itself) inordinate emphasis is placed both on the juridical nature of baptismal liberation and on the merely social aspects of entry into the community (*koinotes*) of believers. Many of the Orthodox reactions to the Lima Document fall short of an understanding of Orthodox baptismal theology and thus address issues that are really foreign to an Orthodox spiritual and patristic view of this mystery. They fail adequately to explicate that exclusive personal commitment in the joint context of the Church in heaven and on earth that characterizes the enlightened Orthodox Christian — that candidate for spiritual warfare with the demons who has been given the weapon of enlightened awareness both of his own potential participation in God and his own potential destruction by the power of darkness.

It is evident that, within a clear grasp of the Orthodox mystery of baptism, it is superficial to speak of the “acceptance” of non-Orthodox baptisms as “valid” or grace-bestowing. In the first place, we have pointed out that there is an exclusive commitment within the Orthodox Church that identifies the newly-enlightened Orthodox Christian. This commitment is appropriate to the struggle defined and delineated by sacred Tradition — by Orthodox tradition. It is in a failure to apprehend this basic truth that so many contemporary Orthodox theologians, with an inadequate footing in the patristic literature, come to imagine that the act of *oikonomia*, that is, of the Church acting beyond herself by the creation of grace in the empty vessels of heterodox baptismal ceremonies, is one of accepting baptismal grace outside Orthodoxy. The Church acts beyond herself in these instances out of respect for the intent of the baptismal act and with regard to its form (preferably triple immersion in the name of the Trinity). In no sense is this “acceptance,” as a young Orthodox theologian has recently pointed out in his study of the much abused and misused First Canon of Saint Basil,<sup>3</sup> anything more than a recognition of the “charismatic quality,” as Father Florovsky has expressed it, of a non-Orthodox sacramental act. The mystery of Orthodox baptism, by which we “. . . accept the death of our propensity for visible things,” to quote Saint Maximos the Confessor, involves

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<sup>3</sup>Gregory Telepneff, “Baptism and Grace,” *Orthodox Tradition*, 3 (1986) 76-80.

not only an immersion into the inner life of the Church, but signifies a move away from the external grace that touches those outside Orthodoxy to that internal grace which is a sign of those baptized into Orthodoxy. In the words of Saint Diadochos of Photiki, in his texts on spiritual knowledge and discernment, before holy baptism, "Grace leads the soul toward good from without. . . . From the moment that we are reborn in baptism, however, . . . grace dwells within." The Church is the repository of this inner grace and the source of that which sustains inner grace. Baptism outside the Orthodox Church, then, is an act detached from the inner life of the Church and separated from the special state of enlightenment that rises above those who, while confessing Christ and honoring the form of baptism put forth in the Gospels, nonetheless are not part of the evangelical call to struggle that is embodied in death to one's self and to the "putting on of Christ" within Orthodoxy. *Oikonomia*, like a magnet of evangelical love, draws those who have embraced the iron faith of Christ. In accepting a non-Orthodox act of baptism, it takes that iron, melts it on the forge of the Church's divine authority, and gives it form and internal strength. In no sense, however, does it recognize that which is purportedly spiritual formation outside Orthodoxy to be anything other than crude filaments of faith. There is but one baptism, if indeed there are many callings and many confessions. And that one baptism is not one in form, but one in grace-bestowing efficacy, rising out of the unique and exclusive authority of the criterion of truth which is the Orthodox faith.

*"To poterion tes evlogias ho evlogoumen, ouchi koinonia tou aimatos tou Christou esti? Ton arton hon klomen, ouchi koinonia tou somatos tou Christou estin? Hoti heis artos, hen soma hoi polloi esmen . . ."* (1 Corinthians 10.16-17). It is on this biblical truth that the spiritual understanding of the eucharist — indeed, of the Divine Liturgy itself — in the Orthodox Church rests. It is a patristic consensus drawn from the truth of this passage that forms the image of the eucharist which we have received from our Fathers. We directly participate in the blood and flesh of Christ when we partake of the blessed cup and the broken bread of the eucharistic rite. And in this participation, which is liturgical and at once community-oriented and profoundly personal, those who are separate become one body. This sharing is real, local, and rooted in a common identity expressed by the Church, the Body of Christ. This basic formula, the essence of Orthodox spiritual life, is one which our contemporary Orthodox



theologians too seldom take into ecumenical dialogue. Caught in dialogues which define the Church around and apart from the eucharistic community, they depart from the basic truth of life in Christ that defines Orthodoxy itself. Saint Ignatios the Antiochian writes that unity with one's bishop and adherence to the teachings of those who guide us in the Church (that is, the bishop along with the presbyters and deacons) is unity with Christ. This unity, realized in its fullness in the eucharist, proceeds but from *one* eucharist. The *pleroma* of the Faith, then, expressed in the common spiritual experience and ecclesiastical reality of the Orthodox Church, derives from, rests in, and is realized through the eucharistic rite. Church is eucharist; the bishop is the Church; the eucharist and the bishop exist in a unity which characterizes the unity of all believers in Christ. In this spiritual whole, in these inseparable truths, one finds a perspicuous exposition of the Orthodox Church's true eucharistic teaching.

The ecumenical concerns of BEM have led a few Orthodox thinkers to speak of a Christian presence in the eucharistic ceremonies and commemorations of the heterodox, in an effort to extend the profoundly eucharistic life of Orthodoxy to those outside her boundaries. One must laud these efforts in recognizing a rightness of intention. However, it should be clear that the spiritual meaning of the eucharist in the Orthodox church life precludes a recognition of eucharistic reality, as we Orthodox understand it, in the heterodox confessions. What they do possess in their eucharistic rites is something which we must respect and honor. At the same time, we must flatly and clearly deny that what they possess is analogous to or isomorphic with the Orthodox eucharist. Even the form of the Orthodox eucharistic rite cannot be separated from the spiritual life of those who have taken part in it: the spiritual lives of "those who have fallen asleep in the Faith, forefathers, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, confessors, ascetics, and every righteous spirit in faith made perfect" (from the mystical prayers of the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom). Orthodox find not only the *pleroma*, or fullness, of the Faith in their unity, one with another, in the earthly realm, but in communion with the Church that has passed on. And this unity is not only one in form and in expressed faith, but in that process of perfection which is the Orthodox way. The faith of the Orthodox Christian is perfected fully in the eucharist — the eucharistic rite constituting the very *raison d'être* of the assembled body of believers — and it is unthinkable that one should imagine the eucharist as the

Orthodox Church understands it to exist beyond those who define it and whom it defines. It is the body, forms the body, and exists for and through the body of Orthodox believers: “*kata panta kai dia panta.*”

General discussions among Orthodox over the Lima Document’s views on the ministry reveal a certain timidity, if not unsureness, about the nature of the priesthood within the Church. This timorous spirit is apparent in several of the Brookline documents, too. Again, the Orthodox reaction to BEM, here with regard to the priesthood, must be unequivocally patristic and must reach into the spiritual traditions of the Church. Initially, we must realize that the priesthood rises out of the spiritual needs of the people. Without the people, the priesthood is not service, but temptation. We read, for example, in Saint John Cassian’s discourses on self-esteem (a “malevolent demon” given an opportunity for action in our “every activity”), of a certain monk who had decided to ordain himself a deacon. One of the desert elders, who occasioned to pass by the young man’s cell, heard him dismissing the catechumens in his fanciful celebration of the Divine Liturgy. The monk was not praised as having noble goals, but stands before us as an example of one suffering from “stupidity,” to use the words of Cassian. A true priest realizes his calling and his subjugation to the Church only from within the body of the Church — from the royal priesthood of the believers. The man himself, apart from those whom he serves, is “dust and ashes,” as Saint Theognostos tell us in his discourse on the virtues, and realizes the angelic state of the priesthood only through the corporate body of believers. Aside from the *ecclesia*, the local church of baptized believers meeting in the oneness of the eucharist, there is no priesthood. Even the royal priesthood itself, we should note, is defined by the *ecclesia*, by the local congregation of believers. If the priest serves the royal priesthood only when he functions to protect the spiritual lives entrusted to him, the royal priesthood in turn constitutes a body of believers only when it is involved in the struggle against the world which is the essence of spiritual life. As Saint John Chrysostomos tells us, the priest is a member of the struggling body of Christians. One — the priest or the believer — cannot be defined without the other. And without the Orthodox spiritual life, both are impossible.

Certainly the Orthodox respondents to BEM are right to acknowledge a calling to Christian service outside the Orthodox Church. And certainly all Orthodox must recognize the salutary role of

Christian leaders in the priesthood and ministry of the heterodox. Again, however, we must never go beyond the spiritual dimensions of our own faith and speak of the Orthodox priesthood outside the Orthodox community. If timidity leads us to such admissions, the admissions are nonetheless absurd. The bishop is the Church. And the priesthood proceeds from the bishop. The *ecclesia* of the local community, the body of believers united around the bishop (quite literally in the early Church), exists as, within, and through the bishop. The bishop in turn exists through and within the people. Without this close interaction — an interaction which manifests the ecclesiastical reality of Orthodoxy — there is no priesthood. So it is that, even in extreme forms of economy, such as the reception of Uniate priests by vesting (a common practice in the last century in Slavic Orthodox churches), the Church first seeks out the ecclesiastical reality of a community of believers bound to the spiritual traditions of the Orthodox Church. This is the root of “apostolic succession” — a common historical bond which effects the grace of Orthodox spiritual life. It is quite wrong, then, for contemporary Orthodox observers to imagine (indeed, “fantasize”) that the Orthodox priesthood exists “*kat’ oikonomia*” outside the boundaries of Orthodoxy, for any exercise of economy with regard to the priesthood rests in an understanding of the “communal” experience in the life of the mysteries. Uniates separated from the structure of the Church, yet maintaining the communal reality from which the priesthood is drawn, were candidates for this “restoration” of orders quite simply because they represented a special case in a special historical circumstance. Rather than provide evidence for an “acceptance” of orders beyond Orthodoxy, they attest to the rigidly “communal” and traditional parameters of the priesthood, which is preserved to some extent in the communal reality of an Orthodox spiritual life lived even outside the formal community of the catholic congregation. (Needless to say, as a critical interjection, the extension of this “economic” recognition of communal Orthodox life to contemporary Uniates, who themselves confess to estrangement from Orthodox spiritual traditions and who have often received their orders from Latin bishops, is an absurdity.) Clearly, as we have seen in the baptismal and eucharistic life of the Orthodox Church, the integration of the priesthood into the spiritual ethos of Orthodoxy rules out the reception of heterodox ministry as an analog to sacerdotal service within the Orthodox Church. The priesthood rises out of Orthodoxy and is defined only within its spiritual domain.

Orthodox responses to BEM, both in the Brookline documents and in general comments from different circles in the Church, point to an urgent need for a return to the patristic and spiritual sources of our beliefs and traditions in addressing the heterodox. But insufficient grounding in the consensual body of patristic doctrine has led many to imagine that the Fathers disagree on the issue of mysteries outside the Orthodox Church. Separating canons from theology and theological speculation from spiritual life sets Fathers at artificial odds with one another, when in fact our own misreading and lack of intellectual acumen, not the Fathers, are at fault. We must come to understand that the whole patristic witness is one which establishes Orthodoxy as the *kriterion* of Christianity. It is the absolute truth from which relative truths are derived. It is the essence from which Christian energies flow. It is the standard against which any authentic confession of Christ must be measured. And this exclusive nature of Orthodoxy is not one which discourages the non-Orthodox from approaching the standard, but is one which invites and attracts the heterodox. Thus the apparent discord between the Fathers which leads some observers to posit that some Orthodox Fathers admit to mysteries outside Orthodoxy while others do not. The spiritual life, which reifies the “criterion of truth” (to use the expression of Saint Irenaios), constitutes a breeding ground for spiritual transformation and for development of that discretion by which a Father can, in one instance, honor the intent and quality of a non-Orthodox sacrament (discerning, as it were, the closeness of its relative truth to the criterion of truth within Orthodoxy), and in another reject such a sacrament. By extension, one can understand the ostensible differences between Fathers, living in different times and dealing with greater or lesser deviations from the standard of truth, in their differing dispositions to accept or reject non-Orthodox sacramental acts. In no instance, however, can a careful reader and a practitioner of the Orthodox spiritual fail to understand that acts of “*oikonomia*” reach out to that which by definition lacks that internal, vivifying grace which rests only in the bosom of the Orthodox Church and which is the peculiar quality of the “criterion of truth.” Whatever respect various Fathers may show for the charismatic and external qualities of grace which proceed from the heterodox believer and from heterodox sacramental acts, there are simply no instances, within the consensual thought and spirituality of the Fathers, of a recognition of the *pleroma* of grace which is contained in the Orthodox mysteries beyond Orthodoxy. Anyone

who imagines such is reading the Fathers out of context, outside of their spiritual ethos, and with prejudgment.

It is perhaps appropriate to note, too, that the contemporary ecumenical movement has produced its own goals and its own ethos. In such an atmosphere, Orthodox respondents are at times captivated by a spirit which runs cross-current to the ethos of their own faith. All of us would, to be sure, welcome a unified Christian witness. All of us wish, in some way, to extend to others the benefits of faith which we glean from our own confessions. We wish to share our faith with others who confess Christ and who embrace the spiritual world. Unless we overcome a certain intellectual immaturity, however, these things can begin to distort our Orthodox faith — especially when we are inadequately immersed in its more profound expressions and more articulate apologetical expositions. We hence begin to wish for all things to be “one,” for all beliefs to be essentially the same. Yet while heterodox may find some natural evidence for this unity, we still find such only in an *artificial* presentation of our faith, which leads us to frustration and despair at times. In at least one of the Brookline documents we can see such despair. It is imperative that we turn from such a course and fully admit that the criterion from which Christian truth is drawn, the true Orthodox faith, has only peripheral connections with the truths drawn from it, much as a compound loses many of the properties of its dominant element, while nonetheless sharing certain properties which other compounds of the same element possess. The relationship between relative truths is far greater than the relation of relative truths to the criterion of truth from which they are drawn, if only because that criterion has a quality (potency or, in the spiritual sense, grace) not contained in its derivatives. If we can understand this, then we can charitably embrace the non-Orthodox and yet move ever closer to the spiritual truths of Orthodoxy from which so many of us are both practically and intellectually removed in this age of inadequate patristic study and spiritual struggle.

In addition to an estrangement from the patristic and spiritual parameters of the relationship between Orthodox mysteries and non-Orthodox sacramental acts, it is clear from Orthodox reactions to BEM, both of a formal and informal kind, that our thinkers and believers have lost sight of the function of the Orthodox mysteries of baptism, the eucharist, and ordination. It seems to me quintessential that we come to a thorough understanding of this function before we react either positively or negatively to the Lima document. We must reflect

carefully on the role that these three mysteries play in the spiritual life of the Orthodox Church and offer comments and reactions formed within such reflection. Indeed, spiritual life is utilitarian. It aims at something. No aspect of the Church can be understood without reference to this spiritual aim, and any presentation of Orthodox views that inadequately captures this aim also inadequately enters into dialogue with the heterodox.

As we have noted, there is a unity of function into which baptism, the eucharist, and ministry fall. Within this unity of function we can talk about these three elements of spiritual life separately, but only with a constant and vigilant eye toward the *Gestalt* — as we have called it — of the Orthodox spiritual experience. The whole of Orthodox spirituality, encompassing the mysteries, anthropology, cosmology, the person, and God in his energetic relationship to man, was expressed simply and succinctly by Saint Seraphim Sarov, the great Russian elder, in his famous conversation with Motovilov: as an effort toward “acquiring the Holy Spirit.” All other things, “prayer, fasting, vigils, and . . . other Christian practices,” the saint tells us, are absolutely necessary to the Christian life, but are mere “means to an end.” This acquisition of the Holy Spirit is the very union of man with God through grace. As Father Florovsky has written: “The ultimate aim and purpose of human life was defined in the patristic tradition as *theosis* [divinization], . . . an intimate ‘communion with God,’ through Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> Salvation, to quote Saint Nikodemos of the Holy Mountain, is impossible without this “enlightenment” that comes through the Holy Spirit in *theosis*, in direct fulfillment of the ancient aphorism, variously quoted by a number of Fathers, that Christ became man that men might become gods (here we use the phrase of Saint Gregory the Theologian). The purpose of the entire spiritual life — encompassing the mysteries — is that of the permeation of “the whole of human existence . . . by the Divine Presence,” again to cite the words of Father Florovsky.<sup>5</sup> The function of baptism, the eucharist, and the priesthood in the Orthodox Church can be understood only in reference to this singular aim of the Orthodox spiritual life. Unless we approach non-Orthodox with a thorough understanding of what

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<sup>4</sup>Georges Florovsky, *Bible, Church, Tradition: An Eastern Orthodox View* (Belmont, MA., 1972), 114f.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, 115.

the Orthodox spiritual aim actually is — this aim which is so peculiar to the Orthodox East and so foreign (if not offensive<sup>6</sup>) to the heterodox ear — then we are not honest in our exchanges. And unless we fully immerse ourselves in the Fathers and understand this peculiar aim, we are perhaps not fully honest, or at least versed, in our Orthodoxy.

Indeed, how differently we look at baptism, the eucharist, and the priesthood when we realize that they fall under the spiritual umbrella of our common Orthodox goal of divinization. The enlightenment of baptism, the activation of the spiritual mind (the *nous*, as Saint Gregory Palamas calls it), becomes an integral part of the ascent toward spiritual transformation, beginning right here on earth, that leads us to our participation in the divine: “... *hina dia touton genesthe theias koinonoi physeos*” (2 Peter 1.4). It is in baptism that we begin a process by which God wishes not to make us Christians alone, “*sed Christum* [but Christ],” to quote Saint Augustine of Hippo. Baptism is but an introduction into that life of transformation which occurs in the *ecclesia* and for and through the community of believers. It has no other function and cannot be understood, in its Orthodox form, aside from that function. It is not so important that we regain a liturgical understanding of baptism in the Orthodox Church (its restoration to a status closely tied to the Divine Liturgy, or its separation from the social setting in which it is often celebrated, for example), as so many argue, but that we grasp profoundly the spiritual meaning of holy baptism and its function in spiritual life.

The eucharist, by the same token, is fully understood only as we recognize its function as a weapon in the war against the world and our fallen natures. The eucharist is the “medicine of immortality,” as the patristic texts so frequently call it, by which we cure ourselves of the fallen nature of sin and the instrument of spiritual restoration by which Christ, to quote Saint Hesychios, “will enlighten our mind ever more and cause it to shine like a star.” If baptism introduces us to the struggle for the death of the flesh and union with God, it is the eucharist which sustains us in this struggle. It is a direct

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<sup>6</sup>A popular Protestant series of the Church Fathers in translation, in one of its early editions, actually took such offense at Saint Gregory’s reference to man’s divinization that the phrase, “that men might become gods,” in order to avoid “heathenish interpretations,” to quote the translator, was rendered “that men might become God’s.”

participation in perfect manhood through the partaking of Christ, the perfect God and the perfect man. As Saint John Chrysostomos tells us, we become “his flesh and his bones.” And this oneness with Christ serves the function of moving us continually away from the world and mortal flesh to the “life in Christ,” as Nicholas Kabasilas describes the sacramental life, and union with God that begins here on earth. Knowing this to be the function of the eucharist, contemporary misunderstandings of fasting and preparation for communion fade away. We come to understand, along with the great Abba Philemon (who, though a priest, dared only serve very infrequently at the altar), that we should participate in the mystery of Christ only in a “pure and chaste condition,” approaching the mystery “free from the flesh” and “free from all hesitation and doubt,” that we might wholly participate in “the enlightenment that proceeds forth from [it].” The whole of the spiritual life is one of attaining illumination and perfection, and the divine gift of the eucharist comes to fulfill efforts toward purity in our daily lives and in our own human will. The eucharist is a food for those who move toward the holy: “Holy things for the holy,” as the Divine Liturgy says. It is death for those who fail to recognize its function. Fasting, abstinence from holy communion by women in their periods, abstinence by men polluted by nocturnal emissions — contemporary objections to these fade when we begin to grasp the true function of the eucharist and its divine aid in our human efforts toward perfection and our daily spiritual struggle with the world and its evil. The ascent toward perfection is centered in the eucharist and we appropriately approach it as something which functions in concord with our highest human goals, aims, and efforts.

Need we here say much, now, about the priesthood? It is obvious that the ministry of the Church brings together all of our efforts toward salvation. Baptism, the eucharist, the ministry: these are impossible without the priesthood. The priest rises above that which is personal, as we can so vividly see in the service of vesting, in which he takes off the “old man” and puts on the new. The *novus homo* of the priesthood is, indeed, Christ acting on earth, in human form, through the priest. His gift of enlightenment at baptism, his indwelling of the believer in the eucharist, and indeed all of the acts of intervention in the life of the world by which it is transformed — all of the mysteries — are effected through the priesthood. If the Orthodox spiritual life has a unique goal and if baptism and the eucharist play



a specific role in the attainment of this goal, the priesthood is integrated into this role by its very function. The priesthood exists for this Orthodox spiritual goal and only when it functions as a channel for the roles played by the various mysteries in consort does it properly exist. It is something *par excellence* Orthodox and exists, as the Orthodox receive it, only within the Orthodox Church. It is, as it were, an appropriate feature of Orthodoxy.

Above all else, it seems to me, the challenge of BEM for the Orthodox Church is one of understanding our priorities as we face other Christians — priorities drawn from an authentic understanding of our Church and from acute self-understanding. The Brookline documents and popular reactions to BEM on the parish level make it abundantly clear that we have a long way to go in defining, let alone realizing, these priorities. We must first move away from the growing tendency to react to challenges from our circumscribed spiritual experiences. Often we criticize our Church and call it to task without really knowing what our faith teaches. This is especially true in America, where at least one of the large jurisdictions was, not so many generations ago, largely Uniate and thus cut off from the living experience of Orthodoxy and from those “holy men” to whom Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow advises us appeal in understanding a spirituality which, after all, rests always on action and *praxis*. There is a growth which must take place in the Orthodox world in the West, where the bulk of ecumenical encounters occur, before we can respond from an authentic Orthodox position. At the same time, secondly, we must also move away from an evaluative stance which is other-dependent; that is, it is time to see and correct the spiritual faults which we evidence when we measure ourselves against Orthodox standards, not against the standards given to us by the heterodox. If to the non-Orthodox our ethnic communities have failed in some dimension of faith essential to the heterodox *Weltansicht*, it is important for us to know that the heterodox do not share in, necessarily sympathize with, or even comprehend our Orthodox experience. We must evaluate our successes and shortcomings by Orthodox standards. And here again, for those Orthodox in the West who have only for a generation or so found themselves free from the Uniate domination, it is essential too that they shed any standards or criteria of judgment that they may have brought with them, even unwittingly, from the Unia and turn to the Orthodox experience. Without these initial steps, which are difficult and which demand from us humility and patience,

we cannot speak of Orthodox priorities, but will simply sink in endless efforts to live up to priorities imposed on our spiritual traditions from without — priorities which impede self-understanding and compromise authentic expression.

If we understand the goal of Orthodox life as the divinization of man, and if we can come to apprehend that this goal is uniquely bound up with Orthodoxy as with no other faith, then we can fulfill the ecumenical role foreseen some decades ago by Father Florovsky: that of witnessing to the standard of Christianity, the goal of goals and truth of truths, before our fellow Christians. To do this, however, we must rise above the tyrannical absolutism of a contemporary relativism that disallows proclamations of exclusivity. We must not let the ecumenical spirit, which purports to be based on tolerance, take from us, in the name of tolerance, our right to be what we have always considered ourselves to be: the historical Church of Christ from which all other Christians have derived their beliefs and confessions. Needless to say, we must also rise above the tyranny of our self-imposed ignorance of the criterion of Christianity which Orthodoxy is. Recently, the renowned Greek churchman, Metropolitan Augoustinos of Florina, wrote that: "If the Divine Liturgy is celebrated and attended with faith, it is enough to demonstrate that ours is the true religion. In no other religion in this world, in no religious service of the non-Christian world, is there the grandeur which shines in our Divine Liturgy."<sup>7</sup> We should note that the boldness of this statement is tempered by the warning that the Liturgy must be "celebrated and attended with faith." In the same way, a careful, attentive knowledge of our Orthodoxy, gained from faithful and reverent study, not from a spirit of critical doubt, leads us to the boldness of finding in our faith the fullness of Christianity, the "true religion," and the religion which is like "no other religion in this world." Our basic priority in encountering the heterodox should be the attainment of this discovery. Otherwise we are not honest in what we present to others.

It is also time for us to attribute the divisions and disunity among Orthodox to ourselves and to our improper understanding of church tradition. Whether one reads confessed Orthodox "traditionalists," "reformists," "modernists," or whatever, he seldom discovers today an appeal to sacred tradition and to the Fathers who achieved

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<sup>7</sup>Augoustinos N. Kantiotes [Metropolitan], *On the Divine Liturgy: Orthodox Homilies*, Vol. 1 (Belmont, MA., 1986), p. 29.

unity — above and beyond their personal differences — in the commonality and catholicity of the Orthodox spiritual life. Rather, he finds constant personal attacks, jurisdictional hatred, and the like. Many Orthodox are more likely to accept non-Orthodox as valid Christians than those fellow Orthodox who may differ from them in their understanding of the Orthodox faith! This is an absurdity which is supported by extreme ecumenism and which bespeaks a total spirit of immaturity. We must establish the priority of knowing one another, we Orthodox, before we address others. And before we can even imagine unity with other Christians, we must attend to the priority of finding unity among ourselves — and this, not by throwing stones at one another and retreating into canons which we do not adequately understand — by returning to the tradition which lies hidden in the Orthodox spiritual life and which neither creates nor bestows, but makes manifest true unity. Unity among ourselves may indeed entail a rejection of the ecumenist's vision of unity; it may entail the loss of some who, thinking themselves Orthodox, will discover, in dialogue with strictly traditionalist Orthodox, that they neither are nor wish to be Orthodox; and it may entail painful sacrifice and alienation from others. The end result, however, will be an intense spiritual renewal in our Church, a move toward the reconstruction of our pristine Orthodox standard before the non-Orthodox world, and the kind of compelling evangelical call to unity which can only come from those who are united in their separation and whose separate status beckons others to the peculiar "people apart" who are the standard of Christian personhood.

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*Children of Abraham: Judaism/Christianity/Islam.* By Francis E. Peters. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983. Pp. 225. Cloth.

Undoubtedly, the interest in greater understanding between the three biblical religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam has increased in recent times partly due to the conflict in the Middle East. Therefore books that deal with the three religions are welcome.

As the author makes clear in his preface, this book is not intended to give a detailed history of the three religions, nor to engage in polemics or ecumenical dialogue. Rather, its purpose is "to underline both the parallels and differences," and to indicate their common roots; it is a comparative study of certain issues and institutions that evolve from one another.

Professor Peters is a great scholar who has contributed significantly to the understanding of Greek classical philosophy and its impact to the Arab intellectual world. In the present work, he systematically presents a topic in each chapter and compares the three religions in terms of points of agreement and disagreement. He begins with "The Scriptures: Some Preliminary Notions." Here Peters analyzes the affirmation of divine revelation. Although all three religions accept God's revelation, they disagree in their views of Scripture." In Judaism the Torah was given to Moses; in Christianity, Jesus is the revelation of God; in Islam God has given Muhammad the final revelation. Each regards the Word of God as "birthright and charter" for their community.

The second chapter deals with the evolution of the three religions beginning with the post-exilic period of Jews. During this period, when the Jews were free to return to Palestine, about 534 B.C., they restored the Temple. Several phases of Jewish political and religious life are discussed here; the Jewish parties and sects, the conflict between Hellenistic Jews and traditional biblical Judaism, the apocalyptic and messianic Judaism, and the appearance of Jesus and Christianity. The author discusses the several movements at the time of the appearance of Christianity and analyzes the struggle of several sects. He discusses the importance of Paul, the Law, and the Gentiles accenting the apostle's conviction that "God was and is the God of all mankind, Jew and Gentile alike" (p. 27). He also discusses Rabbinic Judaism that maintained and preserved Jewish teachings through the ages. The author discusses "Muhammad and Islam." Muhammad as the prophet gave the Qur'an as the "unconditional revelation of

God's will" (p. 35) as expressed in his own words. Professor Peters gives the Western approach and attitude toward the Muslim world. This chapter is intended to give a general statement to introduce the issues and the three religions.

In the third chapter, Professor Peters compares the development of "community and hierarchy" in the three religions. In post-exilic Judaism there were several developments such as kings, priests, prophets, and rabbis. In Christianity following the apostles there are bishops, presbyters, and deacons; in Islam the imam, mahdi, and caliph. In their development the Jewish rabbi became the preacher as well as the guardian of the "tradition of the Fathers." The Christian church structure developed the view of the bishop as head of the community and the councils as a consensus of the highest authority of the purity of the faith or Orthodoxy. In Islam there is no visible head of the people of God, though the imam emerged as leader because of his position as preacher, the mahdi as an eschatological leader and that of the caliph who was the political and military leader and judge.

The fourth chapter treats the important topic of "law." The discussion is centered on the Jewish tradition of the study of the law by the rabbis; the development of the Mishna which was a casebook compiled by rabbis-lawyers. The author discusses the development of church law or canon law. Islam developed a great tradition of law based on "political considerations, financial need, and local custom" (p. 92).

In the next chapter, "Scripture and Tradition," the author discusses the development of sacred Scripture in the three religions. All three religions possess sacred books that are universally accepted. And each had various traditions of Scripture interpretation both allegorical and historical-literal.

In Chapter Six the author treats "the liturgy" in the three religions. Each had its own unique worship yet there are similarities. In Judaism worship was centered in the temple but with the expulsion of the Jews from Palestine, the Jews in the diaspora developed worship centered in the synagogue. In Christianity worship was closely related to the Jewish temple worship and simultaneously in close quarters especially for the celebration of the "Eucharist." Later, developments of several liturgies East and West are discussed. In Islam there is no liturgical sacrifice nor a specific ritual. In Islam private prayers are said five times a day facing Mecca. The noon prayer on Friday prescribes a congregational prayer.

In the chapter seven Peters discusses “asceticism and mysticism.” In Judaism asceticism was not central however, there were examples of Jewish community groups practicing asceticism such as the “Therapeutai” mentioned by Philo. In discussing the Christian mystical tradition in this chapter, Professor Peters gives background and development through the patristic period. In making reference to the fourteenth-century hesychastic controversy the author makes a fundamental error. He in fact states the opposite of what the Athonite monks practiced and taught. He repeats the arguments and accusations of the opponents of the hesychastic movement by stating almost verbatim that the mystics of Athos were involved in “contemplation of the navel” and that their dogmatic error was man’s union with the divine essence” (p. 137). Palamas, the greatest hesychast, clearly states that “all natures are in the highest degree distant from and foreign to the divine nature.” [*Κεφάλαια* 78, PG. 150. 1176B. See also my book *Introduction to St. Gregory Palamas* (N.Y., 1973) and my study, “The Teaching of Gregory Palamas on God” in N.M. Vapori (ed), *Byzantine Ecclesiastical Personalities*. The Byzantine Fellowship Lectures, No. 2. (Brookline, 1975), pp. 89-105; John Meyendorff, *Introductory Study of Gregory Palamas*. For the understanding of the doctrine of deification see Georgios I. Matzarides: *The Deification of Man: St. Gregory Palamas and the Orthodox Tradition*, trans. Liadain Sherrard (Crestwood, N.Y., 1984)]. The hesychasts and Orthodox absolutely deny that the deification of man is “union with the divine essence.” In fact Saint Gregory Palamas in a radical manner denies any relation of created being to the divine essence. I hope Professor Peters will revise this gross error in the future editions of this excellent book. In this chapter he discusses the development as well of the Muslim mystics and the conflicts with the philosophers and lawyers within the Islamic world.

Chapter Eight, on “Theology,” is, in my estimation, the best chapter of the entire book. Professor Peters is an expert in classical Greek philosophy and author of several works on the impact of Greek philosophy in Islamic thought, and he is competent to write such a chapter on theology. He defines the terms, he deals with the Platonic and Aristotelian explanation of religion and the philosophy of God. He analyzes the Philonic and Patristic evolution of philosophy — theology and its influence on Judaism, Christianity and later on Islam. He discusses the several trends of thought of these three religions such as faith and reason and the incompatibility of Athens (reason)

with Jerusalem (faith). It is interesting to see the interaction of Jewish and Muslim philosophers—theologians in the Middle Ages including that of Maimonides.

In the “Epilogue: Sacred History” Professor Peters summarizes his views concluding that the three religions are confidently grounded in the sacred history of the word of God.

This book is of great value to the scholar and student of comparative religion, especially those who are involved in the study of the three biblical religions. Apart from the error mentioned above involving the hesychasts beliefs and the term “Great Church” (pp. 54-56) which refers to the Church in general instead of, as is the practice, referring to the Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The present volume includes a glossary and an index — very important features that aid the reader. I highly recommend this book to those involved in the dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims and especially to priests and seminarians and all those who are interested in the comparative development of these three religions.

George Papademetriou

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*Ἡ θέσις καὶ ἡ ἀποστολὴ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν σημερινὴν Δυτικὴν Εὐρώπην* [The Place and Mission of the Greek Orthodox Church in Present Day Western Europe]. By Andreas J. Phytrakes. Athens: n.p., 1984. Pp. 119, paper.

The present work came out of an address delivered by Professor Andreas J. Phytrakes at the theological conference entitled “Problems and Possibilities for Orthodoxy in the Diaspora,” which was sponsored by the Metropolis of Germany in Michaelshofen, 28 March - 2 April 1965. Although twenty years have already elapsed since its first appearance, the address is still significant today.

The prologue of the book discusses the nineteenth-century flow towards Western Europe of Orthodox refugees and emigrants — among whom many were clergymen, teachers, theologians, and men of letters — and how their contribution gave birth to the term “Western Orthodoxy.” The Orthodox living in the West entered into a dynamic spiritual dialogue with the other Christian churches already there. Consequently, the Ecumenical Patriarchate offered its



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## Clement of Alexandria: Eucharist as Gnosis

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ANDREW L. PRATT

HOPE FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY and ecumenical understanding has focused on the patristic period of Christian church history. This hope looks to the origins of a diverse and complex faith in search of threads of meaning and continuity from which may be woven a tapestry rich in texture and color. The table of communion remains central to ecumenical discussion and affords both crisis and opportunity. Views of the Eucharist, be they sacramental, sacrificial or symbolic, present genuine obstacles to the potential unity of a common cup and common bread.

Clement of Alexandria represents an authentic Christian expression of the Eucharist in which diversity added richness and not division. Clement's emphasis on the relation of the Eucharist to the whole of Christian life and its dynamic quality holds the potential for transcending the narrowness of sacramentality and symbolism. Affirmation of the external elements with inward meaning which comes from Christ alone and a eucharistic ethos toward life represent a powerful Christian understanding with the potential for true communion.

The central theological doctrine for Clement of Alexandria was the idea of Christian gnosis.<sup>1</sup> A wide spectrum of Christian doctrine

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<sup>1</sup> Scholarly work on Clement of Alexandria is readily available. A tasteful introduction may be found in Morton S. Enslin's "A Gentleman among the Fathers," *Harvard Theological Review* 47 (1954) 213-42. Substantial studies have been done by Eugène De Faye, *Clement D'Alexandrie* (Paris, 1898); R. B. Tollinton, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Liberalism* (London, 1914); and W. Volker, *Der wahre Gnostiker nach Klemens von Alexandria* (Berlin, 1952).

was discussed in Clement's writings but always in relation to the progress toward gnosis. Gnosis, for Clement, was the experience of coming to a knowledge of the divine mystery, Logos. There was in Clement, the idea of the divinization of the human through identification with the Logos. If God could become human, humans could become godlike. Ascent to the level of Christian gnostic was not possible for all persons, but one was to ascend as close to the Logos as possible. The idea of ascent did not reflect a hierarchical attitude; Clement considered the faith of the newly baptized to be of the same value to God as that of the Christian gnostic.

A study of Clement's view of the Eucharist must take into account this overall focus of his theology.<sup>2</sup> Two major interests in Clement's view of the Eucharist have been its relation to the Agape meal in the Alexandrian church and whether Clement's view was sacramental or symbol. While these are important issues, they overlook the relationship of Eucharist to Christian gnosis. It is the thesis of this paper that the examination of eucharistic passages and passages which contain eucharistic allusion in the writings of Clement of Alexandria, in light of the ethical treatise theory of Walter Wagner, reveals an understanding of the Eucharist as gnosis which supports consistently the two external symbols of bread and wine and a dynamic internal meaning of spiritual nourishment. Combined together in this view are a soteriological affinity with the death of Jesus the Christ and spiritual significance for Christian life and Christian community. A view is formulated which is non-sacramental, yet more than symbolic. Inherent in this thesis is the idea that Clement's view of the Eucharist may serve as a catalyst toward ecumenical eucharistic dialogue.

Clement's understanding of the Eucharist has traditionally presented problems. Because the Eucharist has no central exposition in any extant writings, Clement's view must be pieced together from passages throughout his writings. The utilization of Wagner's

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<sup>2</sup>J. Baffitol's *L'Eucharistie: La presence réelle et la transsubstantiation* (Paris, 1930), dealt mainly with the issue of sacramentality. Charles Bigg discusses the Eucharist briefly in *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford, 1913). But Bigg's discussion of the Logos is the most valuable material on Clement. Tollinton provided a good discussion but reflects a Protestant bias. André Mehát's "Clement of Alexandria," in *The Eucharist and the Early Church*, ed. Willy Rordorf et al. (New York, 1976) is an excellent thematic study.

ethical treatise theory and the central theme of gnosis will provide a framework upon which these passages may be structured. Clement's appropriation of Platonic and Stoic philosophy has caused some scholars to reject him on the grounds of acute Hellenization. E. Glenn Hinson has noted that Clement "would talk the language" of other religions "but would not commend their misguided faith."<sup>3</sup> Philosophy played a major role in Clement's thought. Clement's relegation of the sacraments behind his overall goal of gnosis necessarily skewed their meaning. In spite of this influence, Clement maintained a strong commitment to the symbols of bread and wine and his interpretation of the Eucharist was always based on Scripture and never on philosophical writings. Clement argued that the practice of the Eucharist should be conformed to and not deviate from what he referred to as the canon of the Church.

The major writings of Clement of Alexandria are the foundation of this study. The context of the passages examined will guide the paper rather than a thematic approach. Evolving from the passages will be a discussion of Eucharist as gnosis.

The brevity of his writings combined with the giant and sometimes ominous shadow of Origen have caused Clement to be a lesser light among the Fathers of the Church. Walter Wagner's words concerning Clement serve as a fitting close to these introductory comments and as transition to the following study.

This non-dogmatic, imaginative, cultural Father speaks to generations of Christians who seek to understand human responsibility and action, divine involvement in man's affairs, and the relationship between religion and culture. It is not the accuracy of his philosophical or cosmological views which draws men to Clement. What makes him attractive and enigmatic is his bold fervor, his reliance on God's creative and embracing love and his eagerness to engage in open discussion.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> E. Glenn Hinson, *The Evangelization of the Roman Empire* (Macon, Georgia, 1981), p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> Walter H. Wagner, "A Father's Fate: Attitudes Toward and Interpretations of Clement of Alexandria," *The Journal of Religious History* 6 (June 1971) 231.

### *Eucharist in Clement's Writings*

Three major treatises written by Clement of Alexandria remain extant: *Protreptikos* or *Exhortation to the Heathen*; *Paidagogos* or *The Instructor*; and *Stromata* or *Miscellanies*.<sup>5</sup> Walter Wagner, in an article, "Another Look at the Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria's Major Writings," has outlined the attempts which have been made to give literary structure to Clement's writings. The traditional theory of a trilogy has been replaced with an ethical treatise theory.

The major works, thus, are best understood as ethical treatises which respect the traditional divisions of philosophy . . . [and] which considered as a whole, satisfy the requirements of writings on particular and absolute duties.<sup>6</sup>

Clement divided human beings into three categories: *phauloi*, *prokopoi* and *sophoi*. *Phauloi* were the disobedient, which comprised pagans and unconverted Jews, and those who were legal slaves to God but not yet baptized, i.e. catechumens. *Prokopoi* were the baptized, the faithful servants of God who were engaged in the ascent of becoming complete persons in the image and likeness of the Logos. *Sophoi* were the Christian gnostics, those who were in the image and

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<sup>5</sup> All three of these works are translated in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 3, dated 1926. There is also a 1867 translation of these three works by William Wilson in the *Ante-Nicene Library*. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 2 also includes a collection by Clement titled *Fragments* and a sermon *Quis Dives Salvetur*. *Paidagogos* appears in a 1954 translation in the *Fathers of the Church* series. A writing of Clement to an unknown Theodotos exists as *The Excerpta Ex Theodoto* published in *Studies and Documents*, Volume 1, 1934. Finally, a segment of a letter found at Mar Saba has been attributed to Clement and published by Morton Smith as *Clement of Alexandria and a Secred Gospel of Mark* (Cambridge, 1973). In this paper, quotes from *Paidagogos* are taken from the 1954 *Fathers of the Church* translation. *Protreptikos* and *Stromata* are quoted from *ANF*. All quotes will be cited by text number.

<sup>6</sup> Walter H. Wagner, "Another Look at the Literary Problem in Clement of Alexandria's Major Writings," *Church History* 37 (1968) 259-60. Wagner based his theory on the work of Friedrich Quatember, *Die christliche Lebenshaltung des Klemens von Alexandria* (Vienna, 1947). Wagner referred to the three divisions of philosophy as logic, ethics, and physics. A further division of ethics included *aretai*, or primary virtues and *kathekonta*, or that which the Logos would have man do.

likeness of the Logos as much as was humanly possible.<sup>7</sup>

The Logos addressed himself or related to each of these three categories in a different way. The Logos, to the *phauloi*, was *protreptikos* or exhorter. Persons in this category were urged to turn from paganism to the Logos. The exhortation was made in general but strident tones. The Logos, to the *prokopoi*, was *paidagogos* or instructor. To these persons, the Logos became the educator in right living, the goal of which was oneness with God. The Logos, to the *sophoi*, was *didaskalos*. The need for strict instruction had passed for the *sophoi*. The Christian gnostic required only general guidelines. There was never any indication that the gnostic stage was static, but rather a dynamic experience of divine knowledge. Clement's three major writings correspond to these three categories respectively: *Protreptikos*, *Paidagogos*, and *Stromata*.<sup>8</sup> Each work addressed a specific stage of spiritual life and took the perspective from which the Logos related to persons in that stage. Passages concerning the Eucharist in each work should be interpreted in light of the work's intended audience and perspective.

#### *Protreptikos — Exhortation to the Heathen*

*Protreptikos* was written to those outside the Christian faith and those inside the faith who were as yet unbaptized. This audience needed to be drawn away from pagan religions and philosophy. Lack of reference to the Eucharist in this treatise is understandable in light of its perspective. Clement would not have divulged to *phauloi* the secrets of the mysteries reserved for those who were within the Church. The Eucharist is mentioned only once and then in the final chapter. The purpose of this passage was, as Hinson has proposed, for evangelistic appeal.<sup>9</sup>

The Lord is the hierophant, and seals while illuminating him who is initiated, and presents to the Father him who believes, to be kept safe forever. Such are the reveries of my mysteries. If it is thy wish, be thou also initiated; and thou shalt join the choir along with the angels around the unbegotten and indestructible and the only true God, the Word of God, raising the hymns with us.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. p. 257.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Hinson, *Evangelization*, p. 230.

This Jesus, who is eternal, the one great High Priest of the one God and of his Father, prays for and exhorts men [12.120].

In this brief passage, Clement offered a small taste of the mysteries of the Christian faith to the *phauloi*. The basic Christian doctrines are present in capsulated form. Jesus, the Word of God, expounds and interprets the rites and mysteries of the faith. With initiation came illumination and to be initiated was to join the Christian community of praise. Because he was speaking to the uninitiated, Clement emphasized the benefits of the mysteries. Even though the symbols of bread and wine were not mentioned, it was clear that Jesus was the focal point of the mysteries. But only to this limited extent did Clement discuss the mysteries with those outside the Church.

### *Paidagogos — Christ the Educator*

Clement makes more references to the Eucharist in *Paidagogos* than in his other two major works. This work was meant for those who were baptized into the Church and in the process of making the pilgrimage toward gnosis. Tollinton has noted that Clement used the Eucharist in both a technical and general sense.<sup>10</sup> The technical sense referred to those passages in which Clement wrote of the Eucharist specifically as a rite of the Church with direct mention of the sacramental bread and wine.

In fact, he blessed wine saying: "Take, drink, this is my blood." He used the "blood of the vine" as a figure of the Word who "was shed for us unto the remission of sins," a stream of gladness [2.2.32].

The general sense referred to those passages in which Clement alluded to the Eucharist in order to illumine some other aspect of the Christian life. Clement discussed the proper manner in which Christians should take meals. Reference is made to 1 Corinthians 10 where Paul discussed the relationship between eating meat sacrificed to idols and the eating of the Eucharist. Clement followed Paul's argument by saying that the Eucharist should instruct how other meals are observed. He concluded "that the true food is thanksgiving" [2.1.11]. When he discussed the Christian attitude toward

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<sup>10</sup>R. B. Tollinton, *Clement of Alexandria: A Study in Christian Liberalism* (London, 1914), 2, p. 151.

drinking wine, Clement's discourse became a lesson on the Eucharist [2.2.19]. In this general sense, all of the Christian life was a Eucharist. The reverent and moderate attitude with which one observed the Eucharist was also the reverent and moderate attitude with which one observed life. The Eucharist carried an ethical dimension and the Christian life a sacramental dimension.

The relationship between the Eucharist and the Christian life was an expression of Clement's idea of the Eucharist as gnosis. *Paidagogos* was instruction to the *prokopoi* as to how the Christian life was to be conducted. The Eucharist was utilized by the Logos as a medium of instruction. To be instructed by the Logos through the Eucharist was to "feed on the Lord."

Again it is said, "He tethers his colt to the vine." This means he united the simple new people to the Word, whom the vine signifies. For the product of the vine is wine; of the Word blood. Both are saving potions: wine for the health of the body; the other, blood for the salvation of the soul [1.5.15].

The Word is everything to his little ones, both father and mother, educator and nurse. "Eat my flesh," he says, "and drink my blood" [6.55]. He himself is the nourishment that he gives. He delivers up his own flesh and pours out his own blood. There is nothing lacking his children that they may grow [1.6.42].

The *prokopoi* have been tethered to the vine. This joining to the Word began the process of purifying the passions and feeding on the benefits of Truth and Immortality.

Clement's understanding of the Eucharist hinged on his interpretation of John 6.53-55. In order to connect Eucharist with Christian growth and gnosis, Clement interpreted these verses from John together with 1 Corinthians 3.1-3. These two passages of Scripture brought together the symbols of blood and milk.

But heavenly food is similar to milk in every way: by its nature it is palatable through grace; nourishing, for it is life; and dazzling white, for it is the light of Christ. Therefore, it is more than



evident that the Blood of Christ is milk [1.6.40].<sup>11</sup>

No contradiction existed, for Clement, in the bringing together of these two symbols. Both were symbolic of a common source, the Word of God.

In all these various ways and figures of speech is the Word spoken of: solid food, flesh, nourishment, bread, blood and milk. The Lord is all these things for the refreshment of us who believe in him. Let no one think it strange, then, that we speak of the blood of the Lord also under the figure of milk. Is it not named wine, metaphorically [1.6.47]?

André Mehát applied the term correspondences to describe Clement's exegetical methodology. The use of this term is at once an attempt to avoid the term allegory. Yet, it is also expressive of the fluidity with which Clement interchanged symbols with his central notion of gnosis. Mehát saw Clement using correspondences in order to show the relation between sensible appearances and spiritual reality.<sup>12</sup> All of the symbols which Clement used had commonality in the Logos which they signified. The Eucharist could have a specific symbolic meaning in and of itself and also have meaning in relation to other symbols. *Paidagogos* should be interpreted in light of this idea of complex correspondences.

Faith is more substantial, in fact, than hearing and is assimilated into the very soul and is, therefore, likened to solid food. The Lord presents the same foods elsewhere as symbols of another sort, when he says in the Gospel according to John: "Do you eat my flesh and drink my blood." Here he uses food and drink as a striking figure for faith and for the promise. Through these, the Church, made up of many members, as man is, takes her nourishment and grows; she is welded together and formed into a unit out of both body, which is faith, and soul, which is hope;

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<sup>11</sup>"Our nourishment, that is, the Lord Jesus, the Word of God, is Spirit become flesh, flesh from heaven made holy. This is our nourishment, the milk flowing from the Father by which alone we little ones are fed. I mean that he, the 'well-beloved,' the Word, our provider, has saved mankind by shedding his blood for us" [1.6.43].

<sup>12</sup>Mehát, "Clement of Alexandria," p. 101.

just as the Lord out of flesh and blood [1.6.38].<sup>13</sup>

The assumption that Clement maintained only a symbolic understanding of the Eucharist in *Paidagogos* would be accurate based on the passages cited to this point. In addition to his symbolic discussion, Clement offered an interpretation most sacramental.

To drink the blood of Jesus is to participate in his incorruption. Yet, the Spirit is the strength of the Word in the same way that blood is of the body. Similarly, wine is mixed with water and the Spirit is joined to man; the first, the mixture, provides feasting that faith may be increased; the other, the Spirit, leads us on to incorruption. The union of both, that is, of the potion and the Word, is called the Eucharist, a gift worthy of praise and surpassingly fair; those who partake of it are sanctified in body and soul, for it is the will of the Father that man, a composite made by God, be united to the Spirit and to the Word [2.2.19-20].

*Paidagogos* was written to the *prokopoi* in order that they might focus on Christ, the Word, as their instructor and educator toward ethical living. Clement illustrated this relationship by encouraging the *prokopoi* to "feed on the Word." Christians were to find spiritual growth by taking the Eucharist and by applying a eucharistic ethos to life.

Let us, instead, taste the Kingdom with a mouth that is chaste and self-controlled, and practice good will in heart, for this is the way a chaste character is developed [3.11.81].

### *Stromata — Miscellanies*

The *Stromata* were written to the *sophoi*, the Christian gnostics. In this work, Clement made few references to the Eucharist. The rationale behind this lack would seem to be that as a person approached the likeness of the Logos there was less need for temporal symbols to

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<sup>13</sup>“Just as the fulfillment of his Father’s will was food for Christ, so for us little ones who draw milk from the breast, that is, the Word of heaven, it is Christ himself who is our food.

For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. And the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world” [1.6.46].

illumine spiritual reality.

Clement began the *Stromata* with an application of the eucharistic attitude to the teacher/learner experience. As one was to examine oneself before partaking of the Eucharist so as not to partake unworthily, so one was to examine oneself to be a worthy learner. The husbandry of the learner was to be twofold. "Nutrition is received both by bread and words" [1.1].<sup>14</sup> Clement affirmed the need for the eucharistic bread while at the same time learning the philosophical intricacies. But there did come a time in the development of the *sophoi* when even words were transcended.

For the God of the universe, who is above all speech, all conception, all thought, can never be committed to writing, being inexpressible. . . . The greatest safeguard is not to write, but learn . . . [5.10].

*Stromata* 5.10 contained the major discussion of the Eucharist. This chapter dealt with the divine mysteries and their veiled nature. Eucharistic terminology was used to illumine how one was to gain knowledge of veiled mysteries. Clement began by quoting Paul that knowledge of the mystery of Christ came through revelation [5.10]. This revelation began with the instruction given in *Paidagogos* to the *prokopoi*.

. . . ye have need that one teach you which be the first principles of the oracles of God . . . For everyone that partaketh of milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe, being instructed with the first lessons. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, who by reason of use have their senses exercised so as to distinguish between good and evil. Wherefore, having the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection [5.10].

*Stromata* was Clement's effort to communicate the way to perfection or mystic contemplation. Whereas in *Paidagogos* Clement had

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<sup>14</sup>Clement goes on to say, "Wherefore the Savior, taking the bread, first spake and blessed. Then breaking the bread, he presented it, that we might eat it, according to reason, and that knowing the Scriptures we might walk obediently" [1.10].

used eucharistic terminology to illumine the temporal life, in the *Stromata* the eucharistic terminology was used to illumine the spiritual life.

And meat is the mystic contemplation; for this is the flesh and blood of the Word, that is the comprehension of the divine power and essence. "Taste and see that the Lord is Christ," it is said. For so he imparts of himself to those who partake of such food in a more spiritual manner . . . For the knowledge of the divine essence is the meat and drink of the divine Word. . . . "Christ our passover was sacrificed for us" — a sacrifice hard to procure in truth, the Son of God consecrated for us [5.10].

Clement's interest in mystic contemplation did not negate the importance of the Eucharist in either the particular or general sense. In *Stromata*, Clement denied those heretical groups who practiced the Eucharist with bread and water as "sects which deserted the primitive Church" [1.19]. To substitute water for wine was to observe the oblation "not according to the canon of the Church" [1.19].

The external symbols of the Eucharist were to remain bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ. But the Logos instructed the *sophoi* with meat rather than milk. For both *prokopoi* and *sophoi*, the Eucharist was a necessary part of the soul's relationship to God.<sup>15</sup>

And giving thanks always for all things to God, by righteous hearing and divine reading, by true investigation, by holy oblation, by blessed prayer; lauding, hymning, blessing, praising, such a soul is never at any time separated from God [6.14].

These passages from Clement's three major works support the thesis that his view of the Eucharist supported consistently the external

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<sup>15</sup>Clement made brief reference to the Eucharist in *Quis Dives Salvetur*. Jesus says, "I am he who feeds thee, giving myself as bread, of which he who has tasted experiences death no more, and supplying day by day the drink of immortality" [23]. In *Excerpta Ex Theodoto* Clement wrote, "The Son is the living bread which was given by the Father to those who wish to eat. 'And my flesh is the bread which I will give,' he says, that is, to him whose flesh is nourished by the Eucharist, or better still, the flesh is his body, 'which is the Church,' 'heavenly bread,' a blessed Assembly" [13.156].

symbols of bread and wine and a dynamic internal meaning of spiritual nourishment as he wrote to *phauloi*, *prokopoi*, and *sophoi* respectively.

The ethical treatise theory of Wagner makes possible a response to the accusation that Clement was concerned only with the ethical benefits of the Eucharist. If the treatises were written with ethical intent, references to the Eucharist would be expected to accentuate its ethical dimension. It could be argued, in turn, that the presence of eucharistic terminology in ethical treatises reflected a central concern for the Eucharist and Clement's attempt to relate its significance and relevance to all facets of the Christian life.

### *Eucharist as Gnosis*<sup>16</sup>

Central to Clement's thought was the idea that God interacted with human beings as an educator. Clement's view of the Eucharist as gnosis was that the bread and wine of the Church served as one means through which the Logos addressed himself to human beings as Educator, Instructor or Illuminator. Wytzes has argued that Clement "conceived the typical Greek notion of *paideia* and Christianized it."<sup>17</sup> Yet, it would seem *paideia* served as a minor theme for Clement while the three stages of philosophy provided the major framework.

The idea of the Eucharist as gnosis rested on the mystical and inward "feeding on Christ." The fact that Clement never clearly defined this term is an obstacle to understanding his thought. Tollinton wrote that "the act or process of spiritual feeding is still inward, mystical, elastic, aided, not restricted by outward rules."<sup>18</sup> Hinson

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<sup>16</sup>Tollinton, *Clement*, 2, pp. 148-50. John Ferguson, *Clement of Alexandria* (New York, 1974), p. 27. Both Tollinton and Ferguson described an Alexandrian eucharistic service. The service began with a homily or exhortation which included the reading of Scripture. The Bread and Wine were then offered and distributed. A prayer and hymn of praise followed and at some time the kiss of peace. It is not clear whether the Eucharist was celebrated in conjunction with the evening Agape meal. Clement discussed both together. It would be more accurate to posit that the Eucharist was celebrated in the morning and the Agape in the evening but that the Agape was to be celebrated in the likeness of the Eucharist.

<sup>17</sup>J. Wytzes, "*Paideia* and *Pronoia* in the Works of Clemens Alexandrinus," *Vigiliae Christianae* 9 (1955) 148. Wytzes defined *paideia* as the whole training and education of children which aimed at the increase of virtue.

<sup>18</sup>Tollinton, *Clement*, 2, p. 154.

observed that Clement “waxed eloquent about the Logos feeding the Church without pinning down too clearly the connection between the Word and the Eucharist.”<sup>19</sup> Clement made the claim that spiritual feeding brought sustenance for the rational and intelligent natures of the person, yet he never articulated an exact doctrine. It should be noted that Clement lived at a time when the Church did not have an exact doctrine of the Eucharist. Rather, Clement’s view seems to be representative of his time. Christians were everywhere celebrating the Eucharist with the external symbols of bread and wine, but there was diversity in how the symbols were interpreted. Clement posited a wide and encompassing understanding of the Eucharist.

Clement’s mystical understanding of the Eucharist stemmed from a mystical exegetical methodology. Burghardt, in his article “Early Christian Exegesis,” recounts the five senses which Claude Mondésert identified in Clement. Along with historical, doctrinal, prophetic, and philosophical was mystical.<sup>20</sup> Mondésert defined this mystical sense as dealing with the soul’s relations with God in its progressive advance toward him. It was in this mystical sense that Clement interpreted John 6.53-55. His interpretation was not *just* allegory, but as Van Eijk noted, “has its reason in the hidden character of the Truth, which is only accessible to those who are initiated. This hiddenness is our essential characteristic of the whole revelation.”<sup>21</sup> For Clement, it was possible to say that the Eucharist was symbolic of feeding on Christ and the progressive advance toward gnosis. It was impossible for Clement to say exactly what the Eucharist meant because that of which it was a symbol was unintelligible outside of symbolic representation due to the hidden nature of Truth. The hidden nature of Truth led Clement to place more importance and interest in what was communicated by the sacramental symbols than the symbols themselves. This focus of interest is evident in Clement’s writings. As he addressed the *phauloi*, *prokopoi*, and *sophoi*, Clement recognized the external symbols but always with a growing inward meaning. Van Eijk wrote:

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<sup>19</sup>Hinson, *Evangelization*, p. 185.

<sup>20</sup>Walter J. Burghardt, “Early Christian Exegesis,” *Theological Studies*, 11 (1950) 101-02.

<sup>21</sup>A. H. C. Van Eijk, “The Gospel of Philip and Clement of Alexandria: Gnostic and Ecclesiastical Theology on the Resurrection and the Eucharist,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 25 (1971) 117.

For Clement, symbols refer to a deeper, or rather, the ultimate meaning behind them. For both the words of Scripture and the sacramental liturgy of the Church give access to the eschatological reality [*res sacramenti*] which is only disclosed as one moves toward gnosis.<sup>22</sup>

Tollinton summarized that Clement recognized the "importance of the external sign as the form, channel and embodiment of the spiritual gift . . . to which different interpretations and even varied values might profitably be attached."<sup>23</sup>

Scholarly debate has argued whether Clement's view of the Eucharist was sacrificial. Bigg defined Clement's understanding of the Eucharist as gnosis with simplicity by stating that for Clement, Christ was present "in the heart, not in the hand."<sup>24</sup> Bigg's oversight was that he projected back onto Clement modern eucharistic distinctions which caused him to draw conclusions incongruent with Clement's time and context. Patrick provided a corrective to Bigg when he wrote "in an eclectic like Clement the argument from logical consistency cannot be pushed too far."<sup>25</sup> Pelikan referred to this issue indirectly by proposing that though a sacrificial interpretation of the Eucharist was not formulated in the theology of the second century, "the saving power of the suffering and death of Christ was more explicitly celebrated in the liturgy . . ."<sup>26</sup> Sacrificial terminology was present in Clement, but since sacrificial terminology preceded the development of sacrificial interpretation it is inaccurate to judge Clement as sacrificial or non-sacrificial. The other alternative would be to judge him as having the potential of being developed in both sacrificial and non-sacrificial directions.

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid. p. 118. Van Eijk went on to say that God can only be known and only reveal himself by means of symbols, images, and allegories. Only the gnostic succeeds in reaching the eschatological *res sacramenti*. Yet, it is one and the same Logos in many ways allegorically described. Clement is more interested in the communion with the Logos than in the visible sacramental means by which it happens (p. 116).

<sup>23</sup>Tollinton, *Clement*, 2, p. 137.

<sup>24</sup>Charles Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* (Oxford, 1968), p. 142.

<sup>25</sup>John Patrick, *Clement of Alexandria* (Edinburgh, 1914), pp. 129-30.

<sup>26</sup>Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (Chicago, 1971), p. 146.

Hinson posited that Clement's understanding replaced material sacrifices with an ethical interpretation.<sup>27</sup> In light of the ethical treatise theory of Clement's writings, Hinson's observations seem more accurate than those who would find sacrificial or symbolic doctrine in Clement.

Accepting that it would be unfair and inaccurate to judge Clement according to the concepts of a later period of history, the reality is that both sacrificial and symbolic language was present in Clement. Tollinton pointed out that when later eucharistic formularies were developed, their language found correspondence with that of Clement.<sup>28</sup> Clement's view of the Eucharist engendered an interpretation which Patrick described as

. . . far from narrow in his conception of the nature and sphere of sacramental grace; but it is certain that his teaching went far beyond the mere symbolism associated with Zwingli. He regarded the Eucharist as an ordinance instituted by Christ, whose method of administration was determined by the Church, and which when received in faith, was a veritable means of "spiritual nourishment and growth in grace."<sup>29</sup>

### Conclusion

The examination of eucharistic passages in the major writings of Clement of Alexandria has revealed a commitment to bread and wine as the external symbols of the Eucharist. A progressive and spiritual meaning has also been revealed. Clement's ideal of the Eucharist as gnosis related the bread and wine to the overall instruction which Christ gave to Christians. Clement defined the essence of the Eucharist as "feeding on Christ."

The fact that Clement's understanding of the Eucharist was wide and expansive does not mean that one can read into his writings any and all views of the Eucharist which later developed. Rather, Clement's view was shaped around the meaning of the Eucharist for the Christian life and the relation of the Logos to each life.

There are weaknesses to Clement's view. Lack of clarity as to what the Eucharist means leads to confusion when one tries to understand

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<sup>27</sup>Hinson, *Evangelization*, p. 103.

<sup>28</sup>Tollinton, *Clement*, 2, pp. 138-39.

<sup>29</sup>Patrick, *Clement*, p. 130.



Clement. The subordination of the bread and wine to the spiritual reality which they signified reflected Clement's bias against the fleshly and temporal. Finally, Clement's emphasis on God as educator belittled or ignored the redemptive nature of both the incarnation and the Eucharist.

The strengths of Clement's view stemmed from his freedom from conformity to an orthodox doctrine. The bread and wine were positive and tangible symbols of the body, blood, and life of Christ. The inward experience was dynamic and encompassed a wide range of meanings from christological presence to allegorical symbolism. The inward experience was also dynamic in relation to the spiritual growth of the individual. Clement related the Eucharist to all of the Christian life by using eucharistic terminology in order to illumine and direct Christian understanding.

Two positive aspects are resultant from this study. First, a more accurate assessment of Clement's view of the Eucharist is attained by interpreting eucharistic passages in light of the ethical context of his writings and his primary theological doctrine of gnosis.

Second, the relevance of Clement's view to modern ecumenical discussion is shown. Clement's view of the Eucharist contributes to the letter and spirit of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches' *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry Paper No. 111*. Many of the points affirmed as essential in the Faith and Order Commission's paper are present in Clement's thought and writings. Clement's commitment to bread and wine coupled with an open and progressive spiritual meaning represents a patristic Christian example toward "the goal of visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship . . ."<sup>30</sup>

Basic agreement on the Eucharist can find dialogue in this understanding which supports freedom from conformity to a specific spiritual interpretation in favor of a dynamic spiritual meaning which includes sacramental, ethical, and educative aspects. Clement of Alexandria's understanding of the Eucharist provides interpretation and terminology which can illumine and direct modern Christian understanding.

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<sup>30</sup>World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Faith and Order Paper No. 111 (Geneva, 1982), p. 1.

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APO 1 and 2 and the rest, result from the demands and needs of the controversies in hand, not from any theological divergence. In fact, from beginning to end, Saint Athanasios' great Christological and soteriological message is the same:

... the only subject involved in Christ is the Eternal Son of God who became man without ceasing to be God by assuming complete and true humanity. That Christ is the Son of God is rooted in the perception that only God can be the Savior. That the Son has assumed complete humanity is rooted in the perception that only what is united with the Savior is saved [p. 547].

Father Dragas has written a masterpiece. It thoroughly deserves the commendation it receives from Professor Thomas Torrance, who in an introduction says that it "will have a valuable impact upon Athanasian studies for years to come" (p. 2). As a Roman Catholic, I sincerely hope and pray that this book by a priest of the Greek Orthodox Church will receive the attention it deserves from the theologians of my own church, and that it will contribute to the dialogue between our churches in truth and in love.

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*Death and Resurrection.* By Joanne E. McWilliam Dewart. Message of the Fathers of the Church. Number 22. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1986. Pp. 198. Paper.

The editor's introduction gives us the underlying purpose of this important series entitled "Message of the Fathers of the Church." Together with the series "Old Testament Message" and the "New Testament Message," the "Message of the Fathers of the Church" was conceived and planned in the belief that Scripture and Tradition worked hand-in-hand in the formation of the thought, life, and worship of the early Church. Fair enough. One must praise the

intention of the editors and appreciate their efforts to present the message of the Fathers to contemporary theologians and laymen alike. The present volume also includes an introduction, the Old Testament and the New Testament background, and a selection of some Fathers and ecclesiastical writers who have written on the important issue of death and resurrection. A short bibliography ends this useful book.

One must say from the very beginning that the reservation of the term Father to the early Christian centuries, and more precisely through Saint John of Damascus (+ 749) is no longer accepted by Orthodox scholars. The Church has never stopped producing Fathers. She has produced Fathers even up to the present day. Secondly, it is not made clear that Origen is not a Father of the Church. Thirdly, the critical, analytical method which is used by the author is not the best way of approaching the inner message of the Fathers of the Church. Moreover, the selection of certain patristic texts in order to prove a point, does not offer a complete picture of the patristic message. Thus, although Dr. Dewart appears to be a good patristic scholar, well-versed in patristic literature, she offers only a partial insight of patristic understanding on death and resurrection. To be sure, the chapters on the Old Testament and New Testament background are well-written, and the author correctly stresses their emphasis on bodily resurrection. The legacy of the New Testament is made clear. Both physical and spiritual death were a result of Adam's sin, but this double death has been overcome, and new life has been given through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The author then treats her subject as it appears in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, and includes First Clement, Second Clement, the Didache, Saints Ignatios and Polycarp, as well as the Letter of Barnabas and the fragments of Papias. She is puzzled from their seeming disagreement among themselves, which can be explained by the fact that they did not write a compendium on eschatology. She also does not clearly mention that Second Clement and Papias do not express the position of the Church at that time. In any case, the author correctly points to Saint Ignatios' emphasis on the resurrection of Christ with which inextricably our resurrection is tied. But why so much emphasis on the millenarian eschatology of Barnabas and Papias? Did they really express the consensus of the universal Church? Even Saint Irenaios' millenarianism should be seen through the vivid and enthusiastic expectations of some early Christians. The Church,

however, never accepted such "numerical eschatology," or the chiliastic interpretation of the "one-thousand-years-reign" after the Second Coming of Christ.

The Apologists faced a different audience and used different methods and arguments. For instance, Saint Justin Martyr used certain arguments familiar to Judaism in his "Dialogue with Trypho." And he used different arguments addressed to the Roman emperor and Roman society at large by pointing out the parallels between pagan and Christian beliefs on death and resurrection. Athenagoras' arguments on the truth of the resurrection are presented quite well, and his emphasis on the proofs of the resurrection is interesting. He said that man was created from the eternal God, that the composite nature of man requires a final resurrection and also demands a final judgment — that is reward or punishment.

The Gnostic understanding of the resurrection as being "spiritual" vis-à-vis Saint Irenaios' belief in the physical resurrection of man is amply discussed, but the most important soteriological concept of Saint Irenaios, that of "renewal," is not discussed as well as it should be. The author does not find a strong presentation on the resurrection of the body in Clement of Alexandria. Indeed Clement's concerns were on a different plateau, but we must add that his eschatology was clear and strong. Origen's story is different, and his eschatology undoubtedly created bitter reactions. In any case, Origen believed in the resurrection of the body, but he wanted to make clear to his pagan adversaries, like Kelsos, that the resurrected body would be completely different from our earthly body. Only people with a poor intellect would believe that we would again acquire our imperfect bodies of this life. On the contrary, change for the better and a resurrection in a way worthy of God, will abolish forever death and sin and the appearance of a material body. This emphasis by Origen on the spiritual body of the resurrection brought about many attacks against him, for it can be misconstrued as diminishing the importance of the real human body at the final judgment. The theory of *apokatastasis* also helped to ruin Origen's theological reputation. The author, however, appears to be an admirer of the "beauty of his conception of eternal happiness as the intimate contemplation of God," which is an attitude completely alien to Orthodox eschatology, but she foresees the difficulty and presents Methodios' reaction; yet apparently she is not happy with

him.

In the sixth chapter, Dr. Dewart discusses in piecemeal fashion the fourth century, and she includes Saint Jerome, Rufinus, Bishop John of Jerusalem, Saint Gregory of Nyssa, Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian (Nanziazenos), Theodore of Mopsuestia, as well as Saint Epiphanius of Salamis (Cyprus). The author does not find the quarrel over the nature of the risen body very serious, and she believes that the conflict was as much one of personalities as of issues. The discussion is not systematic, and to discuss fourth-century eschatology in one small chapter does not do justice to the subject. It is true that the great Fathers of the fourth century contributed significantly to the comprehensive understanding of death and resurrection by stressing the real resurrection of the human body and by pointing to the triumph of good and justice over evil and injustice. They offer us the framework and content of a sound Orthodox eschatology.

Finally a discussion on Saint Augustine's concept of resurrection ends this book, and the author admires Augustine's exposition of the concept of the ultimate human happiness which lies in the eternal contemplation of the divine truth "face to face." Precisely here, Dr. Dewart's approach must not be considered acceptable. True "happiness and contemplation of divine truth" are Augustine's eschatological concepts, but it must be said that they are not in harmony with the patristic tradition of the Church. The Fathers, following Scripture, have set as the ultimate goal of man his salvation and deification. The rational, noetic, abstract method is not the main tool and concern of the Eastern Fathers. It must be said that they approached the doctrine of death and resurrection with the fear of God and with respect for a great mystery which cannot be humanly comprehended and explained. In Dr. Dewart's book, the intellectual effort is apparent, but the mystical element is completely missing. The Fathers of the Church must be approached with true piety, faith, and true mystical, personal experience which transforms earthly doubts into articles of faith and to a complete surrendering to God's love and power.

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## †Professor Xenophon B. Diamond (1909-1987)

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PROFESSOR XENOPHON B. DIAMOND (DIAMANTOPOULOS) HAD A long career in the educational system of the Greek Orthodox Church and served as professor of education at Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

Born in Naxos, Greece where he received his primary and secondary education, he went on to the Teachers Academy of Tripolis and then to the University of Athens where he received three diplomas: in theology, education, and philosophy. From 1935 to 1940 he worked as an assistant to the professor of pedagogics at Athens and became an instructor of philosophy and philology at the same university.

Professor Diamond came to the United States in 1947. He did graduate work in education at Columbia University where he received an M.A. in 1948.

From 1948 to 1973, he served as dean of studies and general director of St. Basil's Academy, Garrison, NY as well as director of religious education. In addition he was adjunct professor of Modern Greek language and literature at City College of New York University from 1962-1964.

In 1971 he was honored with the title of Archon Didaskalos Tou Apostolou by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople.

Professor Diamond served Hellenic College faithfully for years, endearing himself to everyone: students, colleagues, and administrators. He is survived by his wife, Georgia, who served the Department of Religious Education of the Archdiocese as administrative assistant for over thirty years, three daughters, a son, and six grandchildren.

May his memory be eternal.

George C. Papademetriou  
*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*



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John Chrysostom, Apologist: *Discourse on Blessed Babylas and Against the Greeks. Demonstration Against the Pagans that Christ is God*. Trans. Margaret A. Schatkin and Paul W. Harkins. The Fathers of the Church. Volume 73. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1985. Pp. 298.

The English reader must feel abounding gratitude to the known and unknown editors, translators, researchers, and publishers of the series "The Fathers of the Church" for the great contribution they have made by translating the Fathers of the Church into a contemporary, vibrant, and living language. The present volume enhances our gratitude, because both Dr. Margaret A. Schatkin, Associate Professor of Theology at Boston College, and Paul W. Harkins, Professor Emeritus of Xavier University have added another milestone by translating two of Saint John Chrysostom's important works. The first, *Discourse on Blessed Babylas and Against the Greeks*, was done by Professor Margaret A. Schatkin and the second, *Demonstration Against the Pagans that Christ is God*, by Professor Paul W. Harkins.

Both translators appear to be well-versed in the patristic Greek language, and their translations are indisputably excellent. Professor Schatkin is fully aware of the intricacies of patristic Greek as she appears to be sensitive to terms like *παρρησία* (courage or boasting), *Ἕλληνες* (Greeks or pagans),  *χρησμός* (oracle). Professor Harkins appears to know very well even the smallest nuances in words such as *παρουσία* (Christ's second coming), *παρθενία* (virginity), and *φιλοσοφία* (the love and pursuit of wisdom). Both of them must also be praised, for they used outstanding critical editions of the original Greek texts. Professor Schatkin used her own critical edition, prepared for *Sources Chretiennes*, while Professor Harkins used the unpublished critical edition of Norman G. McKendrick. Both offer very informative and useful historical notes on the manuscripts of the texts, and a select bibliography, appropriate for the study of the fourth-century patristic environment and fourth-century theological problematics. The texts are preceded by splendid introductions with sharp, analytical acumen and admirable knowledge of the material in concern.

The introduction by Professor Schatkin provides the chronological setting of the discourse (around 378), as well as the occasion, purpose, and background of the work. It is interesting to note that Saint John Chrysostom wrote this beautiful discourse before his ordination

to the diaconate. Saint John Chrysostom's first task is to refute all the pagan attacks and accusations against Christians, especially from the new Platonic philosopher Porphyry (233-305), from Hierokles (fourth century), and from Emperor Julian the Apostate (fourth century). The task was formidable for the pagan writers used all the ingenuity of philosophical analysis, public religious feelings, and political power in order to fight the increasing strength of the Christian Church.

Although not original anymore, the pagan arguments are repeated by contemporary enemies of Christianity with the same force and fanaticism. This is why Chrysostom's refutation is so helpful today. The pagan authors systematically attacked the Scripture's alleged contradictions and their relation to the Christian Church. According to them, Christ and the apostles were frauds, their miracles fiction, their writings lies and deceit, and the honor paid to martyrs and their relics were acts of impurity and demonic influence. Saint Chrysostom replied with humility, but also the absolute assurance of a true, faithful Christian and as a well-read scholar who knows his adversaries' weaknesses, as well as the power of the Christian truth. Chrysostom's main argument lies in the truth that the victory of Christianity is not due to the apostles, but to the power of Christ himself. The divine power of Christ enabled the apostles and Christian martyrs like Saint Babylas to become true proofs of the spiritual supremacy of the Christian vis-à-vis the spiritual cowardice, deficiency, arrogance, and vanity of the pagans.

Professor Schatkin also discusses the martyrdom of Saint Babylas, the twelfth bishop of Antioch (third century), and the circumstances under which he suffered martyrdom. Although she painstakingly recites all the written traditions concerning Saint Babylas' martyrdom, she correctly concludes that the great Father followed the Antiochian tradition which he probably derived from the elders and the bishop of Antioch. The martyrdom of Saint Babylas is associated with the destruction of the sanctuary of Apollo in Daphne (outside of Antioch). This temple was established by Seleukos I, the founder of Antioch about 300 B.C. Tradition recounts that the relics of Saint Babylas were brought near the sanctuary, and fire destroyed the statue of Apollo and the roof of the temple. The emperor Julian who was in Antioch at that time became enraged and ordered the removal of Saint Babylas' relics back to the city of Antioch.

Chrysostom repeatedly demonstrates the superiority of Christianity in all spheres: Christian truth, the moral achievements of the

Christians, the concern about the common good, Christian virtues in general, and most important, the manifestation of Christ and his undiminished power in the miracles of the martyrs' relics. All this demonstrates beyond any doubt the nobility of Christianity against the baseness of paganism.

The English translation by Professor Schatkin is not only faithful to the original, but its style gives great pleasure to the reader who wishes to enjoy the richness of patristic texts.

Professor Paul Harkins' Introduction is shorter to be sure, but compact and informative. He discusses the problem of the authenticity of the text and discounts the doubts raised by Chrysostom Baur, although he accepts the authenticity on a "bona fide" basis. He rightly stresses the importance of the *Demonstration* as far as its apologetical character is concerned, and he correctly points out that Saint John Chrysostom's arguments towards an audience of pagans and Jews would be different from arguments presented to an audience of Christian heretics. Thus, the argumentative basis of Saint John Chrysostom is not so much Christological as it is theological and historical. After a thorough discussion, Professor Harkins concludes that the text should be dated near the year 382.

The basis of Chrysostom's apologetics is that the Old Testament foretold Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection, as well as the fact that his compatriots would not accept him. He speaks in a most convincing language of the blessings coming forth from the cross of Christ and of his second coming. He stressed the fact that Christ successfully predicted the future, and that the miraculous spread of the Gospel's message is a splendid proof of the surpassing power of Christ, which defeats all adversaries and hindrances. Pagan persecutions and Jewish hostilities could not stop the victory of Christianity throughout the world. Saint John Chrysostom correctly says the Church had to face in battle the ranks of the establishment: public speakers, teachers, the rich, and the rulers. The word of God conflagrated all these "thorns," cleansed and cleared the fields, and sowed the seed of the Gospel message. We are deeply indebted to Professor Harkins for his excellent translation and for making this powerful message of John Chrysostom accessible to all of us.

In the *Discourse on Blessed Babylon*, Saint John Chrysostom points to the fallacious argument that Emperor Julian uses against the Christians: Christian almsgiving is injurious to society! Chrysostom of course replies that the Church does not encourage parasitism, and that

Christians display a holy life of virtue. As in most of his writings, Saint John Chrysostom does not fail to mention the philanthropic character of the Christian Church which is vividly demonstrated in his two works. Thus, both Professor Schatkin and Professor Harkins must again be commended for enabling us to feel closer to the patristic message so that we may appreciate its relevance to our own contemporary world. The reading of Saint John Chrysostom never tires.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

Volume 32, No. 2, 1987

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## Book Notes

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*Μαρτυρία καί Διακονία τῆς Ὁρθοδοξίας Σήμερα* [*The Witness and Service of Orthodoxy Today*]. By Antonios Papadopoulos. Thessalonike: Kyriakides Brothers, 1983. Pp. 218, soft.

The present study begins a series of publications under the heading "Oikoumenika" which deal with three particular subjects: 1) inter-Orthodox relations; 2) inter-Christian relations, the ecumenical movement; and 3) Orthodox monasticism.

The work under review is a manual on ecumenism in its broader sense. The author is not content with a mere enumeration of the main ecumenical events; rather, he prefers to select special subjects, such as man (anthropology), studying his existence, sentiments, needs, problems, etc., always in relation to inter-Orthodox, inter-Christian and ecumenical bearings and documents. In this way, the reader can follow the history of the doctrine of anthropology and get a firsthand knowledge of the inter-Orthodox, inter-Christian, and ecumenical events in the course of the twentieth century.

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## Editor's Note

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THE GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL REVIEW IS INDEED happy to dedicate the four numbers of Volume Thirty-two, 1987 to the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology/Hellenic College on the occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary.

Founded in 1937 by the then Archbishop (later Ecumenical Patriarchate) Athenagoras, and nurtured and sustained through its formative years by Bishop (later Archbishop of Thyateira) Athenagoras, Holy Cross can be proud of the solid contributions it has made over the past fifty years to the life and progress of the Greek Orthodox Church in America and to the Orthodox Church at large.

Warmest congratulations then to its administration, faculty, students, employees, graduates, board of trustees, benefactors, and supporters for a glorious fifty years. May the next fifty be even brighter and filled with ever greater accomplishments.

In this issue we would like, as a way of remembrance and thanks, to recall those whose leadership contributed to the founding, nurturing, and growth of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology/Hellenic College.

(Founder) †PATRIARCH ATHENAGORAS 1937-1948  
(Co-Founder and First Dean) †ARCHBISHOP ATHENAGORAS  
Cavadas 1937-1948  
(Assistant Dean, Dean, Great Benefactor) ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS  
1939-1940; 1954; 1959—  
(Assistant Dean, Dean) METROPOLITAN IEZEKIEL 1944-1953  
(Assistant Dean) BISHOP DEMETRIOS Makris 1946-1950  
(Sustainer) †ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL 1949-1958  
(Assistant Dean) John FRANGOULAS 1953

- (Dean) Father Nikon PATRINACOS 1953-1954  
 (Acting Dean) BISHOP GERASIMOS Papadopoulos 1954; 1966  
 (Dean, President) †ARCHBISHOP ATHENAGORAS  
     Kokkinakis 1955-1958  
 (Assistant Dean) Father Eusebios STEPHANOU 1955-1959  
 (Dean) †Father John PAPADOPOULOS 1958-1961  
 (Dean) METROPOLITAN NIKODEMOS Vallindras 1961-1962  
 (Acting Dean) †Father George J. TSOUHAS 1962-1963  
 (Dean) METROPOLITAN PANTELEIMON Rodopoulos 1963-1965  
 (Assistant Dean) BISHOP ARISTARCHOS Mavrakis 1963-1965  
 (Dean, President) Father Leonidas C. CONTOS 1966-1971  
 (Dean/College) Dr. Themistocles RODIS 1966-1967  
 (Dean/Theology; Dean/College) Father Stanley S.  
     HARAKAS 1970-1980  
 (Dean/College) Father Demetrios J. CONSTANTELOS 1970-1971  
 (Vice-President, President) BISHOP IAKOVOS Garmatis 1971-1976  
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 (Acting Dean/College) Father George KARAHALIOS 1974-1975  
 (Dean/College; Acting Dean/Theology) Father N. Michael  
     VAPORIS 1976-1985  
 (President) Thomas C. LELON 1976-1986  
 (Assistant, Acting Dean/College) Dr. Penelope TZOUGROS 1984-1985  
 (Dean/Theology; Dean/College) Father Alkiviadis C. CALIVAS 1980—



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G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*Faith and Renewal: Reports and Documents of the Commission on Faith and Order, Stavanger 1985, Norway (13-25 August 1985), Faith and Order Paper No. 131. Ed. Thomas F. Best. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986. Pp. 256.*

As it appears from the title of this book, we have here the main papers and presentations of the meeting of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches, which took place between the 13th-25th of August, 1985 in Stavanger, Norway. This meeting took place only after two years of the general assembly of Vancouver in 1983; thus the participants of the new Faith and Order Plenary Commission could have the opportunity to be initiated and actively participate in the process of digesting the old, and reflect on a fresh vision of the future of the Ecumenical Movement. As Dr. Gunther Gassmann, the director of the Commission, states in his introductory note, the Stavanger meeting produced no significant statement which could be submitted to the member churches of the WCC for studied reflection. As he put it, the meeting "operated like a worldwide theological consultation" (p. 5) thus providing important insights and perspectives for the on-going work and study of the WCC. Of course, the main item on the agenda was the celebrated document "On Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry," and its broad impact and implication on member churches was ably discussed. Two other major projects have been also undertaken at the conference. The one was under the title "Towards the Common Expression of the Apostolic Faith Today," and the second under the title "The Unity of the Church and the Renewal of Human Community." As usual, introductory remarks were read in plenary, the participants were divided into groups which discussed the above mentioned topics, and also produced drafts texts and reports which finally were presented and discussed in fourteen plenary sessions.

There is no doubt that the conference at Stavanger was productive, and fruitful; apparently, its work prepared and framed up in concise forms the problematics to be discussed at the World Conference on Faith and Order in 1989. One must not fail to mention also the Norwegian factor for the success of this conference. The predominantly Lutheran Norwegians offered excellent hospitality to the members of the Conference, and they contributed immensely in

cultivating a community spirit of Christian love and understanding among the member churches. The Orthodox Liturgy on August 15 is mentioned with respect, and one goes through the pages of this interesting volume with the feeling that serious work and reflection were completed in Stavanger in August, 1985.

From the list of the attendants, it appears that the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Orthodox autocephalous churches were well represented. From Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School of Theology, I will mention Dr. Kyriaki A. FitzGerald and from St. Vladimir's Seminary, the Reverend Thomas Hopko. We are most happy to see our venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate represented by excellent and experienced theologians such as Metropolitan Bartholomew of Philadelphia, Professor John Zizioulas (presently metropolitan of Pergamos) and the Reverend George Dragas.

It is true that the meeting at Stavanger dealt once more with the desire, hunger, and thirst for full unity among Christians. The participants acknowledge the hindrances existing in building up a common expression of the apostolic faith needed so badly in our own times and in our own days. But a prudent "explication" is still needed so that words become meaningful and theologically relevant to our theological quests for total unity and an unbounding love in Christ. To put it in the optimistic language of Emilio Castro, the General Secretary of WCC, "Let us believe that the ecumenical ship is sailing" (p. 63).

The recommendations for further work and the by-laws of the Faith and Order Commission complete this attractive and interesting volume, constructive, and helpful indeed for those who are involved in the present stage of the Ecumenical Movement.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*Science and Religion: A Critical Survey.* Holmes Rolston, III. New York: Random House, 1987. Pp. 358.

The author of the present book has impressive credentials in both theology as well as mathematics and physics. He presently teaches philosophy at Colorado State University. In an admiring and bold way, he deals with the critical dialogue and confrontation between science and religion. The book is full of technicalities and apparently has been written for a special audience. But the fact however that

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Finally, the text of the *Mystagogia* itself is the great contribution of this book and should be highly appreciated. The translation of the original text from Migne (PG 91) is well done without sterility of style, but with apparent effusion of the contemplative language of Saint Maximos. Indeed, by reading Saint Maximos' *Mystagogia* one becomes acquainted with the liturgical life of his times (sixth-seventh centuries) as well as with the wonderful, allegorical, and spiritual interpretation of the Divine Liturgy. For instance, at the First Entrance we separate ourselves from all the confusion and delusions of the outside world. The reading of the Holy Gospel declares the believers' utter rejection of the premordial error, and the reception of the holy, life-giving sacrament proclaims our future adoption as sons, the goodness of our God . . . and the deification which will come without exception to all the worthy.

The author must be congratulated for his splendid effort to make Saint Maximos' work accessible in a good and useful translation.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

G O T R 32 (87)

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*Freedom in Mission: An Ecumenical Inquiry, a Perspective of the Kingdom of God.* By Emilio Castro. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1985. Pp. 352. \$12.95, paper.

"What is the missionary obedience that corresponds to our past history, to our present awareness and to the demands of the kingdom, as we read the Bible today?" So, Emilio Castro writes in his introductory paragraphs of his own answer "Freedom in Mission: An Ecumenical Inquiry." Because of the nature of his query, one has to wonder whether a resolve can ultimately be reached. While there are numerous works on mission this is the only current examination which attempts a critical assessment of the topic from an ecumenical understanding of the kingdom of God. Prior to its appearance we have had only sketches found in lone articles throughout the limitless boundaries of ecumenical spheres. The Rev. Dr. Emilio Castro, fourth General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, has produced an exemplary theological study that attempts to give the critical reader

a total picture of mission as understood in the perspective of the Kingdom of God, which "demands," insists the author, "total freedom to serve that Kingdom, to participate in its announcement and in its manifestation."

It is well that this Uruguayan Methodist with a penchant for identifying substantive issues has undertaken what he calls "an invitation to participate in the total endeavor, to shape society more in accordance with God's will and the pattern of God's Kingdom." Without question the book is a valuable edition to a basic bibliography on ecclesiology and mission. The contents of this ecumenical inquiry submitted to the Faculty of Theology at the University of Luzanne for the purpose of obtaining a Degree of Doctor of Theology is divided into two major sections. Part 2 is an excellent resource section of published as well as unpublished articles, organized under four headings: Mission in the Perspective of the Kingdom; Latin American Kairos; The Church and Its Agenda in the Mission of the Kingdom; Mission Yesterday—Today—Tomorrow.

Part 1, a biblical theological discussion of the kingdom of God and its missionary implications, reviews the present precarious situation. It is here that Castro insists that the Church is not "in the business of saving individuals who will receive a passport to certain bliss" but rather "to serve the cause of the kingdom of God which implies transformation of the whole reality." The word freedom, therefore, is preferred by the author over the term responsibility, as it opens the Church's imagination to "so many other ways to join the fight of the Kingdom up to the limit of our concrete possibilities." The consequence of such freedom rejects an either/or approach to the goal of Christian mission which oftentimes polarizes between religious experience and Christian participation in the total human struggle. Castro challenges the Church to create a synthesis of the two realities, "an expression of the total impulse of the whole Church." In short, the goal of Christian mission is an invitation to participate in "the total endeavor of shaping society more in accordance with God's will."

Apart from its ecumenical character which examines the topic of mission from various theological/historical points of view, Castro's thesis draws on all current theological approaches in order to construct what the writer calls "a humanetical process of mission," a dialectic which will help create insights into a new historical manifestation of faithfulness. While a closer examination of this work would prove too lengthy for our present task I believe that a concise unpacking

of this "hermeneutical process of mission" is quite appropriate.

Although the author himself does not number the stages, it appears that the process may be viewed as a cyclical dialectic of four phases. The first phase, the consideration of the text of divine inspiration, calls our attention to the ongoing memory of the Kingdom of God. Quoting Mortimer Arius, Castro asserts that this first phase recalls the "subversive memory of Jesus." This initial consideration is always accompanied by a call to obedience and affords our ecclesiologies the proper opportunity to enter into the "human situation" as Jesus did.

The second phase in Castro's cyclical hermeneutical process can only be the result of prayer, the interplay between the past, present and the future — a central dimension of the author's ecclesiology. It was at this point in the recent past that Orthodox theologians distinguished between the Orthodox attitude towards mission and the conservative evangelical attitude. Nikos Nissiotis wrote "an Orthodox would begin from a sound ecclesiology, that is from the Church as the focus, means, and sign of the regathering of the whole world into fellowship with God." Castro has obviously learned much in recent years from the deep spirituality of Orthodox tradition. As it would appear that at this point he does not neglect to refer to the sacramental inspirational functions of the Church which cannot be isolated from its total witness to the whole community. "There can be no true liturgy," writes Castro, "if it does not celebrate the great acts of God in the contemporary world." He continues by insisting that it is the "task of the Christian community to discern this working of God, to accompany him, to help him, and to proclaim him." It is evident, therefore, that Castro's discussion of mission in the light of the Kingdom of God wards against the dangers of changing ecclesiology as well as surrendering the Church to listen to the world from which it would gather its agendas.

The third phase of this hermenutical process is a consequence of the aforementioned phases and in the author's words "makes our own, the fate of the needy, the marginalized, the exploited, the sinners." The Church's relation to the poor is not a socio-ethical issue, but a Gospel question. "Our participation in this collective guilt" which creates as well as benefits from the structure prevailing today is imperative. Because the kingdom is fully manifested in the total self-emptying of Jesus Christ, those who listen to his message are invited to respond in radical discipleship. Repentance, therefore, is the first act of such a response. This is for Castro the ultimate goal, paving

the way for the actualization of the kingdom of love in history which will provide the intellectual and inspirational categories which will help our Church in its missionary obedience. It is from this perspective, writes Castro that we recover the memory of the kingdom of God.

Repentance leads to the fourth and final phase of Castro's hermenutical process of mission, the memory of the kingdom of God which means the ongoing memory of the Kingdom of God which the Holy Spirit calls to our attention. If our emphasis on Christian mission therefore respond to this ongoing memory of the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit, if it does not discern these eschatological pointers then "that too becomes a betrayal of the Gospel." In the final analysis, "spiritual salvation is of greater importance than our temporal and material wellbeing." "Consequently," writes Castro, "the community of faith which proclaims and remembers the events of yesterday discovers the contemporary invitations and challenges of the divine spirit." Hence, from the divine inspiration of phase one we are sent once again to test the Spirit's insights in new historical manifestations of faithfulness and thus we begin the cyclical hermenutical dialectic again.

The late Alexander Schmemman, in his book, *Church World Mission* wrote that "the reality of the Kingdom of God constitutes for the Orthodox faith the ultimate term of reference for each Christian and therefore the only permanent principle and criterion in distinction from one another, as well as their relationship to one another." Schmemman underscores the fact that the Church's presence in the world, as well as for the world must be seen in the light of the Kingdom of God. As we have seen, Emilio Castro's examination is indeed an excellent proclamation of this fact, that the Church is never more present towards the world and more useful to it than when she is totally free from it.

Temptation is to give way to a sense of defeatism and to look around to the old people who sit in our pews and see there the image of a dead Church. Castro warns that "the kingdom of the world is the final bribe offered by the devil to Jesus." Emilio Castro's *Freedom in Mission: An Ecumenical Inquiry* would rather invite us to join the movement of the Kingdom of God. "How the dynamics of our congregational life would change" insists the author, "if we could internalize this conviction."

Frank Marangos  
Pensacola, Florida



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with Jerusalem (faith). It is interesting to see the interaction of Jewish and Muslim philosophers—theologians in the Middle Ages including that of Maimonides.

In the “Epilogue: Sacred History” Professor Peters summarizes his views concluding that the three religions are confidently grounded in the sacred history of the word of God.

This book is of great value to the scholar and student of comparative religion, especially those who are involved in the study of the three biblical religions. Apart from the error mentioned above involving the hesychasts beliefs and the term “Great Church” (pp. 54-56) which refers to the Church in general instead of, as is the practice, referring to the Church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The present volume includes a glossary and an index — very important features that aid the reader. I highly recommend this book to those involved in the dialogue between Jews, Christians and Muslims and especially to priests and seminarians and all those who are interested in the comparative development of these three religions.

George Papademetriou

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*Ἡ θέσις καὶ ἡ ἀποστολὴ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας εἰς τὴν σημερινὴν Δυτικὴν Εὐρώπην* [The Place and Mission of the Greek Orthodox Church in Present Day Western Europe]. By Andreas J. Phytrakes. Athens: n.p., 1984. Pp. 119, paper.

The present work came out of an address delivered by Professor Andreas J. Phytrakes at the theological conference entitled “Problems and Possibilities for Orthodoxy in the Diaspora,” which was sponsored by the Metropolis of Germany in Michaelshofen, 28 March - 2 April 1965. Although twenty years have already elapsed since its first appearance, the address is still significant today.

The prologue of the book discusses the nineteenth-century flow towards Western Europe of Orthodox refugees and emigrants — among whom many were clergymen, teachers, theologians, and men of letters — and how their contribution gave birth to the term “Western Orthodoxy.” The Orthodox living in the West entered into a dynamic spiritual dialogue with the other Christian churches already there. Consequently, the Ecumenical Patriarchate offered its

services for the organization of the Orthodox communities and dioceses there and generally played a positive role in their development.

The first part of Phytrakes' work examines the position of the Orthodox Church vis-à-vis the Western churches. In the past strong accusations against Orthodoxy were made in the West by Adolf von Harnack, the *Realencyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche* and by Roman Catholic pontifical encyclicals, as well as by some individual members of that church. Nevertheless, some voices were heard on behalf of the Orthodox Church. Among such spokesmen were two Roman Catholics, Franz von Baader and Prince Maximilian of Saxony, and two Protestants, Earl Holl and Hans Ehrenberg.

Today, however, a movement known as a discovery of a nostalgia for Orthodoxy is evident within the Western churches, and scholars actively seek an understanding of Orthodoxy. In this regard, Phytrakes mentions the work of Protestants such as E. Benz, Fr. Heiler, Adolf Deissmann, Erich Seeber, and H. Hodges. He also notes the change in climate of Roman Catholic — Orthodox relations with popes John XXIII, Paul IV, and John Paul II since 1959. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was instrumental in this change.

The second part of the book deals with the mission of Orthodoxy in the present. Basic elements of Orthodoxy theology and tradition are discussed. Topics covered include: the unity and spiritual continuity of Orthodox teaching, tradition, patristic teaching, eternity and the world, Orthodox worship, the laity, monasticism, the saints, synodical order, and Orthodoxy and the ecumenical movement. As an epilogue, the author briefly considers the challenge of Greece's membership in the European Economic Community and the effects this might have on the relations between the Orthodox Church and the West.

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Chalke, Turkey

*Τὰ θρησκευτιολογικὰ πλαίσια τῆς ἀπολογητικῆς Κλήμεντος τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως:* [The Apologetics of Clement of Alexandria from a Phenomenological Perspective]. *Analecta Blatadon* No. 41. Thessaloniki Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984. Pp. 135, paper.

The present study was originally submitted to the faculty of the University of Thessalonike, Greece, as a doctoral dissertation. The

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## Heroines and Haloes

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EVA CATAFYGIOTU TOPPING

I WAS ONCE ASKED WHAT I DO. THE ANSWER WAS BRIEF, BUT not very informative — “I read and write.” This did not sound like much, but there was no further question. Had there been, I would have explained in this way. “For some time I have been reading and writing about Byzantine hymnography. More recently I also read and write about women in the Church.” I would have added that both subjects are vast in scope and time, both interesting and important to understanding Orthodox traditions, history, and spirituality.

Strange as it may seem, Byzantine hymns and women in the Church are not unconnected subjects. Orthodox hymnography includes thousands of hymns to women: to the Theotokos, and to women saints. In fact what I read about women in the hymns of our Church first turned my attention to the subject of Eve’s daughters and the *ekkle-sia*. Until then it was entirely outside my research interests. Nor had I, a Greek Orthodox woman by birth, given any thought to the history and position of women in Eastern Christianity. As it has turned out, the study of Greek hymns in honor of females has proved most instructive. Not only do they reveal the grandeur of the Church’s heroines and the brightness of their haloes, but they also reflect an ingrained tradition of negative and demeaning attitudes of church and society concerning women.<sup>1</sup>

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A paper given at the Clergy Laity meeting of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of Chicago (Sept. 26, 1985).

<sup>1</sup>See E. C. Topping, “Patriarchal Prejudice and Pride . . .,” *Journal of Modern Greek Studies* 1 (1983) 7-17; idem, “Belittling Eve,” *Greek Accent* 5 (1984) 24-27, 49, 51.

This complex challenging subject can, of course, be studied from various perspectives: scriptural, historical, theological or sociological. To my great delight I soon discovered that the study of the lives and hymns of women saints illumined and enlivened this subject in many ways. In addition, from my reading in the relevant Greek sources I became acquainted with an Orthodox sisterhood that transcends time and place. I have not been the same since.

These haloed heroines of Orthodoxy number in the thousands. Together they form an unbroken golden chain, binding the past, present and future. Needless to say, the centerpiece of this golden chain holds the most exalted position among all the saints. No female or male saint can match the divine glory (θεία δόξα)<sup>2</sup> of the Theotokos.

In every respect our female saints are the match of their brothers, sons or fathers. There is even a female counterpart to Saint George. Our Blessed Mother Elizabeth the Miracle-Worker (April 24)<sup>3</sup> also killed a dragon. But unlike Saint George she did not use a weapon. When Emperor Leo I gave her convent a property inhabited by a dreadful dragon, this fifth-century Constantinopolitan abbess approached the monster, armed with only a cross. Saint Elizabeth killed the dragon by spitting on his head and trampling on him with her feet.<sup>4</sup> (What a marvelous ikon this would make!) I am, however, still searching for a female double of Hosios David of Thessalonike who lived for years in an almond tree.

Like males, females achieved sanctity and haloes in different ways, there being no single royal road that leads to God and holiness. Narrated in synaxaria, menologia and sermons, and praised in countless hymns, these saints provide endlessly fascinating, priceless documents of Christian women's history.

From these Greek sermons and hymns we quickly learn that from the beginning women have played crucial and creative roles in the Church; that women of the Church have not always been segregated, silent and subordinate. With admiration I often reflect on Saint Theodosia of Constantinople (May 29).<sup>5</sup> In the eighth century this brave

<sup>2</sup> A frequent phrase found in Byzantine hymns to the Mother of God.

<sup>3</sup> See Nikodemos Hagiorites, *Συναξαριστής*, 2 vols. in 1 (Athens, 1868), 2, p. 107. Hereafter cited as Nikodemos.

<sup>4</sup> For a fuller account see F. Halkin, "Sainte Elisabeth d' Héraclée, Abbesse à Constantinople," *Analecta Bollandiana* 91 (1973) 248-64.

<sup>5</sup> Nikodemos, 2, pp. 172-73.

nun led a group of women in a public demonstration against the emperor's policy. After preventing the removal of Christ's ikon from the Chalke Gate the women continued their protest by marching on the patriarchate. For her fidelity to Orthodoxy Theodosia paid with her life. But immediately this woman-martyr became a powerful symbol of resistance and heroism.

Within the ever-expanding galaxy of Orthodox saints we find women who were disciples of Christ, apostles, evangelists, deacons, teachers, preachers, healers, prophets, founders of Christian communities, builders of convents and churches, and conveners of ecumenical synods. These holy women remind us, lest we forget, that God *includes* women in the divine image (Gen 1.27), and that in the new creation inaugurated by Christ there is neither male nor female (Gal 3.27-28). They also remind us that the Holy Spirit calls females<sup>6</sup> and males equally to be saints, to serve God and humankind. Contrary to the stereotype of female weakness, dependence and submission, our women saints are models of strength, self-determination and resolution, virtues which patriarchal tradition assigned only to males.

These church mothers and heroines of ours do not, however, receive from their Orthodox daughters and sons the honor they deserve. With a few notable exceptions, most female saints remain obscure names inscribed in liturgical books. These remarkable women remain lifeless forgotten shadows, relics of the past. This summer in Athens I asked a devout woman lawyer to name ten female saints. She was ashamed and surprised that she could not.

Therefore let us together on this occasion recall and honor the women saints of September, the first month of the ecclesiastical year. September has thirty days and at least one hundred and fifty female saints. Their names enchant our ears and imaginations. Listen to these: Euanthia (Sept. 11); Kalliste (Sept. 1); Vasilissa (Sept. 3); Vevaia (Sept. 4); Charitine (Sept. 4); Melitene (Sept. 16); Theopiste (Sept. 28); Epicharis (Sept. 27); Ia (Sept. 11); Myrsine (Sept. 9); and Euphrosyne (Sept. 25). It is worth noting that on September 1, the first day of the new liturgical year, our church commemorates several male and forty-three female saints.<sup>7</sup> September, moreover, is by no means exceptional in

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<sup>6</sup> Acts 1.14 states that a "group of women" were in the "room upstairs" when the Holy Spirit descended as promised by Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Hosia Martha, the martyr Kalliste, the Forty Virgins and Ascetics. See Nikodemos, 1, pp. 4-5.

the number of women saints. The other eleven months are also richly graced with heroines and haloes.

Because the calling to sainthood never recognizes national or ethnic boundaries, September's women saints constitute a strikingly cosmopolitan group. Wherever Christian communities existed women heard and answered the call to holiness, in ancient lands stretching eastward from the Pillars of Heracles in the West to the distant Tigris and Euphrates. Our holy women were born, lived and died in Spain, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Cappadocia, Arabia, Armenia, and Persia.

Likewise, the calling to sainthood recognizes no social classes, distinctions between rich and poor. Our women saints belong to all social strata, the highest as well as the lowest. On September 17 and 18 two women martyrs are commemorated. Both were slaves. Agathokleia<sup>8</sup> was martyred at the hands of her pagan mistress. Without faltering in her faith the slave girl endured eight years of daily harassment and persecution. Ariadne,<sup>9</sup> a slave in the house of a Phrygian nobleman, died a martyr's death because she refused to participate in her young master's birthday celebration in a pagan temple. Many other women saints are described as belonging to the upper classes, from which indeed came a large number of the first women converts to Christianity (Acts 17.4,12).

The September calendar of saints also includes three women of royal blood: a Persian princess, the martyr Kadosa (Sept. 29), and two empresses of Byzantium. The first wife of Theodosios the Great (reg. A.D. 379-395), Spanish-born Plakilla (Sept. 14)<sup>10</sup> added a halo to her imperial crown by her zeal for the faith (εὐσέβεια), her humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη), and above all by her love for people (φιλανθρωπία). With her own hands this pious empress attended to the needs of the sick and poor in the hospitals which she had built.

Saint Pulcheria (Sept. 10)<sup>11</sup> imitated her grandmother's piety. Throughout her long career in imperial and church politics (A.D.

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<sup>8</sup> Nikodemos, 1, p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> Nikodemos, 1, p. 52.

<sup>10</sup> Nikodemos, 1, pp. 42-43. This empress-saint was eulogized by Saint Gregory of Nyssa after her death in A.D. 387. K. G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1982), pp. 23-26, quotes from the eloquent eulogy.

<sup>11</sup> Nikodemos, 1, p. 31. My brief discussion of this imperial woman saint is based on Holum, *Theodosian Empresses*, pp. 79-111, 175-216.



414-453) Pulcheria lived the austere life of a nun. Her exercise of power and her personal participation in the *ekklesia* are extraordinary, even for a Byzantine empress. Pulcheria's image was painted above the altar of Hagia Sophia. On Easter she entered the sanctuary of the *Megale Ekklesia* and took communion with the patriarch, the priests and her brother the emperor.

In A.D. 451 Saint Pulcheria convened the Synod of Chalcedon<sup>12</sup> in the basilica of a local female martyr, Saint Euphemia. Hailing the empress as the "light of Orthodoxy" and "protectress of the faith," the 520 fathers of the Synod adopted Pulcheria's ecclesiastical policy. And although she was a female, they allowed her to appear before the assembly of bishops. This epoch-making Fourth Ecumenical Synod had a "mother" along with "fathers."

Taken together, the women saints of September span at least 1800 years, that is, most of the Christian era. The earliest come from the New Testament: Saint Elizabeth (Sept. 5), the mother of the Forerunner John the Baptist; the Theotokos, whose nativity is celebrated on Sept. 8;<sup>13</sup> Saint Hermione (Sept 4), a woman prophet mentioned in Acts 21.7-9. The most recent is the Greek neo-martyr Akylina (Sept. 27).<sup>14</sup> When she was still an infant her father had apostasized (τούρκεψε). Just two centuries ago, in 1764, Akylina was martyred in Thessalonike. Encouraged by her mother to resist her father's pleas and to endure tortures by the Turks, this young woman, aged eighteen, chose death over betrayal of her Orthodox faith.

Called "God-bearing" (θεοφόροι), "brides of God" (θεόνυμφοι), "gloriously victorious" (καλλίνικοι) and "all-most-blessed" (παμμακάριστοι), martyrs formed by far the largest group of women saints not only in September but in the other months as well. This should not surprise us. For, from the beginning, whenever Christians were persecuted, women were among the martyrs. In the first recorded persecution, Saul, later to become Paul, arrested women along with

<sup>12</sup>Ibid. pp. 213-16. Later, two other empresses who convened holy synods were also canonized: Saints Eirene and Theodora, August 9 and February 11 respectively.

<sup>13</sup>The first major feast of the liturgical calendar. Because Mary's sainthood requires special treatment it cannot be discussed in this essay.

<sup>14</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 79 and *Νέον Μαρτυρολόγιον*, 3rd. ed. (Athens, 1961), pp. 186-88. In addition to Akylina and Philothea of Athens (February 19), the best known female neo-martyr, there are other women who remained faithful to Orthodoxy even unto death.

men and dragged them off to jail (Acts 8.1-3). In every persecution women endured imprisonment, physical and mental tortures. Loyal unto death, many women have paid blood tribute to the Church. Martyrdom is a great equalizer and recognizes no gender distinction.

In the Greek sources female martyrs appear both as equals and as leaders. "Imitating the cross, death and voluntary sufferings of Christ,"<sup>15</sup> forty women (Sept. 1) shared martyrdom with their *didaskalos*, the deacon Ammon. Kasdoa (Sept. 29),<sup>16</sup> and Kalliste (Sept. 1)<sup>17</sup> gained martyrs' crowns with their brothers. In a hymn<sup>18</sup> to the latter the hymnographer emphasizes that Kalliste "like a mother" led her two brothers to martyrdom.<sup>19</sup> This trio is praised for being "firm-of-mind" (στερρέοφρονες).<sup>20</sup> But Kalliste, clearly the leader of the three martyrs, alone is called "all-wise" (πάνσοφος).<sup>21</sup> Wives and mothers shared martyrdom with male members of their families. Theopiste (Sept. 20)<sup>22</sup> was martyred along with her husband, an ex-general, and their two sons; Dominata, a Roman matron (Sept. 10),<sup>23</sup> along with her three sons. In other instances, mothers, daughters and sisters faced martyrdom together: Sophia and her three daughters, Elpis, Pistis and Agape (Sept. 17),<sup>24</sup> the three sisters Menodora, Metrodora and Nymphodora (Sept. 10).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>From a hymn sung on September 1 in their honor, published in *Μηναία τοῦ ὁλοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ*, 6 vols. (Rome, 1888-1901), 1, p. 15. Hereafter cited as *Menaia*.

<sup>16</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 83-86.

<sup>17</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 5.

<sup>18</sup>Published for the first time in *Analecta Hymnica Graeca*, ed. I Schirò, I: *Canones Septembris*, ed. A.D. Gonzato (Rome, 1966), pp. 41-51. Hereafter cited as *Analecta*.

<sup>19</sup>*Analecta*, pp. 46, 51.

<sup>20</sup>*Analecta*, p. 48.

<sup>21</sup>*Analecta*, p. 45.

<sup>22</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 54-55. See also the hymns in *Menaia*, pp. 210-19.

<sup>23</sup>Nikodemos does not mention her and her sons; but see the hymns in *Analecta*, pp. 168-77 and the commentary, pp. 423-26. Prokopios the hymnographer mentions a church built in their honor (*Analecta*, p. 175), thus suggesting the existence of a cult.

<sup>24</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 48-49.

<sup>25</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 29-30. See *Menaia* pp. 116-22 for the hymn to this trio of fourth-century female martyrs, composed by Saint Joseph, the distinguished ninth-century hymnographer.

The first woman martyr is celebrated by the Orthodox Church on September 24. Saint Thekla First-Martyr and Equal-to-the-Apostles (Πρωτομάρτυς καὶ Ἰσαπόστολος)<sup>26</sup> was perhaps the most revered heroine of the early Church. She inspired generations of women in the Greek East. To be called a "second Thekla" was to receive the supreme compliment. In ninth-century Constantinople Thekla, a hymn-writing nun, boasted of the long catalogue of female martyrs, headed by her first-century namesake.<sup>27</sup> In Byzantium where imperial princesses bore her name, Saint Thekla enjoyed high honor. Hymnographers sang her glories<sup>28</sup> and learned bishops<sup>29</sup> recorded her many miracles. This one I like best. When an illiterate woman received a Bible as a gift Saint Thekla miraculously granted her the power to read.<sup>30</sup>

Saint Euphemia (Sept. 16)<sup>31</sup> Great-Martyr and Worthy-of-all-Praise (Μεγαλομάρτυς καὶ Πανεύφημος) is the second most illustrious female saint celebrated in this month. A victim of Diocletian's persecutions in the third century, Euphemia was martyred in Chalcedon, her hometown. Before long a magnificent basilica was built in the martyr's honor.<sup>32</sup> In 451 Saint Pulcheria chose this church as the meetingplace for the Fourth Ecumenical Synod, confident that Saint Euphemia, the local spiritual powerhouse, would assist her. The empress' confidence was not misplaced. And Saint Euphemia the Great-Martyr gained renown as the guardian of Orthodox dogma and as Preacher-of-Christ (Χριστοκήρυξ).<sup>33</sup> Thus the collaboration of two women, one in heaven and the other on earth, secured the success of the Synod of Chalcedon and the triumph of Orthodoxy over heresy.

The superior numbers and fame of martyr-saints should not,

<sup>26</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 63-64. For the hymns of her feast day see *Menaia*, pp. 238-46.

<sup>27</sup>E. C. Topping, "Thekla the Nun: In Praise of Woman," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 25 (1980) 353-70.

<sup>28</sup>Anatolios, Saint Andrew of Crete and Ioannes Monachos are among writers of hymns to Thekla.

<sup>29</sup>For example, Basil, bishop of Seleukia (c. 440-459), PG 85.477-617.

<sup>30</sup>Translated by A.-J. Festugière, *Sainte Thècle, Saints Côme et Damien . . .* (Paris, 1971), pp. 81-82.

<sup>31</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 47. For the hymns of her feast day see *Menaia*, pp. 178-87.

<sup>32</sup>See C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood, NJ, 1972), p. 32.

<sup>33</sup>From the kanon to Euphemia by Ioannes Monachos, *Menaia*, p. 185.

however, overshadow the haloes of women who took other paths to sainthood. Monasticism and asceticism offered women other routes to holiness. Behind convent walls and in solitary cells women found freedom to pursue spiritual perfection, to become "friends of God." The haloes of women who achieved sanctity as nuns, virgins, or ascetics shine no less brightly than those of martyrs. Such a saint is called "blessed" (δσία) and is recognized as "our Mother" (ἡ μήτηρ ἡμῶν).

This group of women saints is well represented on the September calendar. Our Blessed Mothers include Martha (Sept. 1),<sup>34</sup> mother of the Syrian fifth-century stylite, Saint Symeon; Euanthia (Sept. 1),<sup>35</sup> about whom nothing is recorded except her floral name; Athanasia (Sept. 18 or Oct. 9);<sup>36</sup> the ideal wife who became a nun. Unlike Eve, she gave her husband good advice, persuading him to become a monk. Andronikos was luckier than Adam.

More dramatic are the lives of three women-saints who are commemorated this month. Our Blessed Mother Euphrosyne (Sept 25),<sup>37</sup> an Egyptian female ascetic, lived for thirty-eight years in a male monastery. Dressed like a man and calling herself Smaragdus, she surpassed her fellow-monks in ascetic austerities and virtues. Our Blessed Mother Theodora of Alexandria (Sept. 11)<sup>38</sup> was a married woman who left home, donned male garb and entered a male monastery in the desert. Repenting her sins and "making herself a gift to God," Theodora lived there the rest of her life. The true sex

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<sup>34</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 4, merely lists her name along with a distich. Her sainthood derives primarily from her motherhood. Her famous son, by contrast, is praised by Nikodemos in two long columns. Mother and son are celebrated on the same day.

<sup>35</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 4.

<sup>36</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 114-16, assigns the feast of Andronikos and Athanasia to October 9, although other authorities give September 18 as the date.

<sup>37</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 64, relates how Euphrosyne revealed her true gender and identity on her deathbed. For thirty-eight years her father had been searching for his lost daughter. As she lay dying he came to her monastery. When she saw him, she said, "Father," her last word. Whereupon the old man followed his daughter's example and "forsook the world." Hosios Paphnoutios is celebrated on the same day as his daughter.

<sup>38</sup>For a description of Theodora's triumphs over Satan see Nikodemos, 1, p. 32. She is sometimes identified with Amma Theodora who is quoted in the *Ἀποφθέγματα πατέρων*. For the text of these sayings of the desert mother see P. K. Chrestou, *Ἀποφθέγματα γερόντων* (Thessalonike, 1978), pp. 288-93.

of Euphrosyne and Theodora was not discovered until after their deaths.

Susanna (Sept. 19),<sup>39</sup> our third woman-monk, is called "Blessed-Martyr" (Ὁσιομάρτυς) because she was both an ascetic and a martyr. The child of a mixed marriage, she was born in Palestine. Rejecting the religion of her pagan father and Jewish mother, Susanna became a Christian. She then cut her hair, put on male clothing, adopted the name John and entered a male monastery in Jerusalem. Twenty years later her true sex was discovered. She should have been punished for violating canon laws. Instead, the bishop of Eleuthero-polis ordained (ἐχειροτόνησε), Susanna a deacon.<sup>40</sup> Between 361 and 363 Deacon Susanna was martyred during Julian the Apostate's persecution of Christians in the empire.

Our Blessed Mothers Euphrosyne, Theodora and Susanna and other women monastics and ascetics received high praise from enthusiastic hagiographers and hymnographers. They are admired for their spiritual attainments which often outshone those of men.<sup>41</sup> But most of all they are commended for having overcome the weakness and flaws thought to be inherent in their sex and for having become men. The holiness of females traditionally being considered inferior to that of males,<sup>42</sup> this was a great compliment.

In September the Orthodox Church also pays tribute to women-apostles, remembering the great actions of women in the days when the Church was young, alive and spreading the *euangelion* throughout the *oikoumene*. This was the golden age for women in the Church. In the new creation women assumed roles of leadership. The New Testament preserves the names of female apostles, deacons, prophets and teachers, women touched by the fire of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1.14).

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<sup>39</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 306, assigns her feast to December, although the *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, pp. 58-59, dates it to September 19. Preserved in six manuscripts, the hymn to Saint Susanna by Saint Joseph the Hymnographer is found in *Analecta*, pp. 269-79 with commentary, p. 443.

<sup>40</sup>Nikodemos, 1, p. 306.

<sup>41</sup>From the numerous examples of this attitude expressed in the hymns and in the church fathers I refer to a few; *Analecta*, pp. 272, 276; Nikodemos, 1, pp. 22, 32, 65.

<sup>42</sup>These three "women-monks" are not unique. Among others, Hosia Anastasia the Patrikia (March 10, Nikodemos, 2, pp. 25-27); Hosia Maria (February 12, Nikodemos, 2, p. 415) and Hosiopartheno-martyrs Eugenia (December 24, Nikodemos, 1, pp. 333-34) illustrate women's internalization of the masculine ideal.

As a matter of historical truth, the Christian Church has founding mothers as well as fathers.

Since, according to Scripture, the Holy Spirit bestows *charismata* without discrimination between female and male, the Orthodox Church recognizes as saints a number of women-apostles: Junia (May 17), hailed by Saint Paul as “outstanding among the apostles” (Romans 16.6-8); Priscilla (Feb. 13), praised by Paul for her inspired teaching (Acts 18.26); Photeine (Feb. 26),<sup>43</sup> converted by Christ at the well (Jn 4.1-42), the first apostle to the Samaritans; Mariamne (Feb. 17),<sup>44</sup> sister of the Apostle Philip and missionary in the cities of Asia Minor; Mary Magdalene (July 22), widely honored as the “apostle to the apostles”; Horaiozele (July 26),<sup>45</sup> converted by Saint Andrew the First-Called, the continuer of his *apostolikon ergon*.

During the first month of the liturgical year four women-apostles are commemorated. Saints Xanthippe and Polyxena (Sept. 23),<sup>46</sup> aristocratic sisters from Spain, were converted by Saint Paul. Xanthippe’s apostolic career was confined to her native land, but Polyxena’s extended from one end of the Mediterranean world to the other. The latter is associated with the apostolates of two males,<sup>47</sup> Saint Andrew who baptized her and Saint Onesimos (Feb. 15), known from the New Testament.

Saint Thekla the Great-Martyr (Sept. 24)<sup>48</sup> is also honored for her apostolic life and work. She too was converted by Saint Paul. Despite her mother’s tears and her fiancé’s threats, Thekla cut her hair, donned male clothing and ran away to join Paul. She was first his disciple (μαθήτρια) and then his co-worker in the mission field. Then Christ, through Saint Paul, commissioned Thekla to be an apostle. On her own she preached and baptized in the provinces of Asia Minor until her death. In many Byzantine hymns and sermons this woman who defied the ancient gender taboos of her time is given

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<sup>43</sup>She is also commemorated on the Sunday of the Samaritan Woman. See E. C. Topping, “St. Photeine, the Woman at the Well,” *The Churchwoman* 49 (1983-84) 23-24.

<sup>44</sup>For Mariamne (p. 9), see E. C. Topping, “St. Joseph the Hymnographer and St. Mariamne Isapostolos,” *Byzantina* 13 (1985) 1034-52.

<sup>45</sup>Nikodemos, 2, pp. 278-80.

<sup>46</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 62-63.

<sup>47</sup>Polyxena’s career follows the model of teamwork by a male and female apostle, first recorded in Romans 16.3,7.

<sup>48</sup>See above p. 137 and notes 26, 27, 28.

the exalted title and rank of *apostolos*.<sup>49</sup>

In defiance of a patriarchal culture that inflicted silence on women and restricted them to private domestic roles, the woman-apostle of the first century led a public life whose success depended on her spoken word, the *logos*. It is hard for us in the twentieth century to imagine how revolutionary and unconventional this lifestyle was for a woman at that time.

Saint Hermione (Sept. 4),<sup>50</sup> prophet, healer, teacher and preacher, illustrates the public career of the woman-apostle. One of the four prophet-daughters of Saint Philip the Deacon (Acts 21.8), she is vividly portrayed in a kanon composed for her feastday by the ninth-century hymnographer Joseph the Hymnographer.<sup>51</sup>

Empowered by the Holy Spirit with many gifts, Hermione is a virtuoso healer,<sup>52</sup> the envy of her medical colleagues, presumably all male. With her "speaking-of-God tongue" (θεολόγω σου γλώττη)<sup>53</sup> she is able to heal the sick soul. Like Christ and the male apostles Saint Hermione used words to cure physical and spiritual ills. But in this case the healing words fall from a woman's lips.

An inspired teacher and preacher, Hermione relied on the right use of words to communicate a new faith to an unbelieving pagan world.<sup>54</sup> The admiring hymnographer describes her words as full of wisdom (σοφώτατοι λόγοι), "shining like flashes of lightning in the dark,"<sup>55</sup> and winning many souls for Christ.

The divine *Logos* and the Holy Spirit indeed never deserted Saint Hermione. A condemned Christian woman standing before Roman judges, Hermione "preached the incarnation of the Word" (τὴν τοῦ Λόγου σάρκωσιν κηρύττουςα).<sup>56</sup> And at the end, in the face of a martyr's death, this woman-apostle triumphs once more and "proclaims things divine" (ῥητορεύεις τὰ θεῖα).<sup>57</sup>

The lives of Hermione and other women saints are more than

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<sup>49</sup>See, for example, *Menaia*, pp. 239, 245.

<sup>50</sup>Nikodemos, 1, pp. 16-17.

<sup>51</sup>*Analecta*, pp. 88-97, with commentary, pp. 412-13.

<sup>52</sup>*Analecta*, pp. 89, 90, 96.

<sup>53</sup>*Analecta*, p. 89.

<sup>54</sup>*Analecta*, pp. 89, 90, 92.

<sup>55</sup>*Analecta*, p. 89.

<sup>56</sup>*Analecta*, p. 91.

<sup>57</sup>*Analecta*, p. 91.

interesting stories. To remember these daughters of light is to pay them deserved honor and at the same time to relive epic moments of Christianity's history. But beyond this, Orthodoxy's women saints pose a question that demands an honest answer. By what prejudices are Orthodox women in 1985 denied equal dignity and full participation in the life of the Church?

Finally, what do these heroines and haloes really mean to us Orthodox, for today and tomorrow?



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Homily on the Transfiguration  
of Our Lord Jesus Christ  
by  
Saint John of Damascus

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HAROLD L. WEATHERBY

INTRODUCTION

THE FOLLOWING TRANSLATION OF SAINT JOHN OF DAMASCUS' HOMILY on the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ is based on the Greek text printed by Jacobus Billius in his sixteenth-century edition of the works of Saint John of Damascus (Paris, 1577). I have preferred this to the text in Migne (PG 96. 545-76) because the latter contains many errors. However, since Migne is readily available and Billius is not, I have included column references to Migne. Also, I have made mention in notes of significant differences between the two versions. The notes also incorporate Billius' seventeen *scholia*, designated as *Sch.* with the accompanying number. In the main, the scriptural references are taken directly from Billius's edition. I have also compared Billius's Greek text with his accompanying Latin translation and with the Latin translation in Migne.

I am indebted to Professor William H. Race of the classics department at Vanderbilt University for help with obscure passages in the Damascene's Greek and for a careful reading of the entire translation.

Homily on the Transfiguration  
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1. [Col. 545] Come, let us keep festival today, O pious congregation. Come, let us join in festivity today with the powers above,<sup>1</sup> for they have come here to feast with us. Come, let us shout aloud with our lips as upon well-tuned cymbals. Come, let us exult in spirit, for to whom belongs a feast and solemn assembly,<sup>2</sup> to whom joy and exultation if not indeed to those who fear the Lord, who worship the Trinity, who together with the Father venerate the Son and coeternal Spirit, who in soul and thought and voice confess the Godhead undivided and made known in three hypostases, who know and confess Christ the Son of God, and God, one hypostasis known in two undivided and unconfused natures and with their own natural properties. To us belongs rejoicing and all festal joy; for us Christ has instituted<sup>3</sup> the festival; for rejoicing is not for the impious. Let us lay aside the cloud of every grief which obscures our mind and hinders its rising up to things above. Let us count as nothing all earthly things [cf. Phil 3.8], for our citizenship is not on earth. Let us stretch the mind toward heaven, whence we look for the Savior, Christ our Lord [cf. 1 Tim 6.14].

2. Today the abyss of light unapproachable, today the unlimited effusion of divine radiance shines on Mount Thabor, upon the Apostles. [Col. 548] Today Jesus Christ is revealed as Master of Old and New Testaments, the thing and name dear to me, truly the most sweet and most desirable, and the thought surpassing all sweetness. Today

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<sup>1</sup>Migne adds here, φιλεόρτοις — “who love feasts.”

<sup>2</sup>Sch. 1: “To whom belongs a feast” seems to be an allusion which reverses the sense of Proverbs 23: “Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath wounds without cause? . . . They that tarry long at wine” (KJV).

<sup>3</sup>Literally, “accomplished” or “performed” (ἐκτετέλεκεν).

Moses the originator<sup>4</sup> of the Old Testament, the divine legislator, stands beside Christ the lawgiver on Mount Thabor as a servant before his Master and sees distinctly for himself Christ's dispensation, which of old was taught symbolically in a mystery. For such in my judgment the "back parts" [cf. Ex 33.23] of God signify.<sup>5</sup> And [now] Moses sees clearly the glory of the Godhead, being sheltered under the cleft of the rock, as Scripture says. And the rock is Christ, the incarnate God, Logos and Lord, as the divine Paul expressly taught us: "But the rock was Christ" [1 Cor 10.4], who, as it were, opened a certain very small aperture of his flesh and with a light boundless and more intense than all the power of sight dazzled those present with him. Today the very pinnacle of the New Testament [Peter], who openly declared that Christ was the Son of God, when he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," [Mt 16.16], sees the author of the Old standing beside the Lawgiver of both proclaiming clearly, "This is he who is, whom I predicted would arise as a prophet like me [cf. Dt 18.15] — like me in so far as he is a man and leader of the new people but beyond me and my master and master of all creation, who made both covenants — old and new — with you and me. Today to the virgin of the New Testament [John] the virgin of the Old [Elias] proclaims the Lord, the Virgin of a virgin. Come, therefore, obeying the prophet David let us sing to our God, let us sing to our King: "For God is the King of all the earth, let us sing praises with understanding" [Ps 46 (47).7] tasting the words.<sup>6</sup> The throat tastes food, [cf. Job 34.3], but the mind discerns the word — so speaks the wisest man. And let us sing praises also to the Spirit [cf. 1 Cor 14.15], who searches out all things, even the very depths, the hidden things of God [cf. 1 Cor 2.10] — in the light of the Father

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<sup>4</sup>Ἐξαρχος. Therefore, possibly "author" or "principal figure." The Latin translates it as *auspex*.

<sup>5</sup>Sch. 2: By the "back parts" of God some understand the humanity of Christ, and indeed the Damascene [does so] in this place. Some however [understand by it] that magnificence of God which shines in created things. These things are indeed spoken of as the "back parts" of God which coming after him declare him to us, which Gregory the Theologian expresses quite elegantly (Orat. 2): τὰ μετ' αὐτὸν ἐκείνου γνωρίσματα — "The Signs of him after him."

<sup>6</sup>After the quotation from Psalm 46 (47) Migne adds, ψάλλωμεν ἀγαλλιάσεως χεῖλεσι· ψάλλωμεν συνέσι νοός — "Let us sing with joyful lips, let us sing with an understanding mind" [Col. 548].

and in the Spirit who makes all things manifest — we who behold the light, the unapproachable light, the Son of God. Now are seen by the eyes of men the unseen things; an earthly body shining forth [with] divine splendor, a mortal body welling forth the glory of the Godhead. For the Word was made flesh, and flesh was made the Word, although neither departed from its own nature. O wonder surpassing all thought! The glory did not accrue to the body from without but from within, from the more-than-divine Godhead united to it in an ineffable manner according to the hypostasis of the Word of God. How can unmixed things be mixed and yet remain distinct? How do things not capable of combination combine into one without departing from the essential dispositions of their own natures? This is the action of unification by the Hypostasis: the things united are one, and they become one Hypostasis,<sup>7</sup> in distinction without division, in unmixed unity of preserved oneness of the Hypostasis and in the preserved duality of natures, through the infleshing of the immutable Word and through the incomprehensible, immutable theosis of mortal flesh [Col. 549]. And the human things take on divinity and divine things humanity<sup>8</sup> by the mode of the exchange and of the unmixed reciprocity in each other and of the oneness according to the hypostasis.<sup>9</sup> For he is one, who was that from eternity, although he later became this.

3. Today are heard by the ears of man things unheard. For the man who is beheld, the Son of God, is testified to be the only begotten, the beloved, the consubstantial. The testimony is without deceit, and the proclamation is true: the Father himself, who begat, voiced the proclamation. Let David be present and let him now sing more clearly and distinctly what he said of old when he foresaw at a distance with prophetic and pure eyes the advent in the flesh of the Word

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<sup>7</sup>Ἀπεργάζεται here presents a difficulty. It means to “finish,” to “form” or to “create.” Theologically such a reading seems suspect, for the things united, godhead and manhood, do not form or create the hypostasis. Rather it would seem that the hypostasis of the Word effects the union, as the immediately preceding clause says; and as Billius’s Latin translation says: *Hypostaticae vnionis haec res est: qua fit, vt, quae coniuncta sunt, vnum.*

<sup>8</sup>Literally, “The human things become of God (Θεοῦ), and the divine things become of man (ἀνθρώπου).”

<sup>9</sup>Migne adds ἄκρας — *supreme oneness*” or “consummate oneness.” Migne’s Latin gives a temporal interpretation: “*original oneness*” — *a primo momento* [Col. 549].

of God for us: "Thabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy Name" [Ps 88 (89) 13]. Hermon rejoiced on a previous occasion, having heard the name of a Sonship clearly ascribed to Christ by the Father when a short time ago the mediator of the Old and New Testaments, the forerunner, went forth to Jordan to baptize; the precious treasure hidden in the desert as in darkness shining to the world, the light unapproachable, unseen by the short-sighted, having been sent to proclaim [Christ] publicly, when in mid-Jordan the water of remission [of sins] stood still [and] cleansed the world, itself not [yet] cleansed;<sup>10</sup> when with the voice of the Father thundering from heaven the one being baptized was certified as the beloved Son; and the Spirit in the form of a dove confirmed the testimony [cf. Mt 3.16-17]. But now it is Thabor that rejoices and makes glad — that mountain divine, holy and exalted that now rejoices worthily, not less in glory and splendor than in airy height — because it contends with heaven in grace. For there in that place angels are not able to intrude their fixed regard; in this place the select of the apostles behold [Christ] shining forth in the glory of his Kingdom. In this place resurrection of the dead is assured, and he is manifested as Lord of the dead and of the living, having released Moses from the dead and brought forward Elias living, as a witness, who of old drove a fiery chariot from earth to heaven. And here even now the chiefs of the prophets prophesy, revealing the departure of the Master through the cross. Wherefore Thabor leaps and rejoices and imitates the leaping of lambs, having heard the very<sup>11</sup> witness of the Sonship from the cloud — that is, from the Spirit — Christ the lifegiver, witnessed by the Father. For this is the name which is above every name [Phil 2.9], because of which Thabor and Hermon rejoice. "This is my beloved Son." This is the joy of all creation; this is the gift of honor to men, and [their] boast which cannot be taken away; for he is man, although not merely man, who has been witnessed [Col 552]. O the joy beyond understanding granted to us! O the blessedness beyond hope! O gifts of God exceeding longing! O graces not restricted by the measures of demands! O a dispenser free of envy and beyond nature, possessing immense magnificence! O gift worthy not of the

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<sup>10</sup>Οὐκ αὐτὸ καθαιρόμενον. My addition of "yet" takes a liberty with the text: presumably the water was cleansed when Christ entered it.

<sup>11</sup>Αὐτήν: possibly "the same" — i.e., the same witness that Hermon had heard at the time of the baptism.

receiver but most certainly of the giver! O strange exchanges: giving power and receiving weakness! showing man without beginning by the One who is without beginning taking a created beginning in bodily fashion!<sup>12</sup> For if indeed man is deified by God's being made man, he is shown to be at once both God and man. Therefore the same one, being man, is without beginning in the Godhead and, being God, has a beginning in manhood.

4. Of old indeed, on Mount Sinai, smoke and whirlwind and darkness and terrifying fire veiled that supreme descent [cf. Ex 19.18-20]<sup>13</sup> announcing the lawgiver as unapproachable and exhibiting obscurely his back parts and revealing him as the sovereign artificer through his own creatures. But now [on Thabor] everything is filled with light and splendor. For he himself, the maker of the universe and the Lord, has come from the bosom of the Father, not having gone out of his own proper place, which is verily resting in the bosom of the Father, but having condescended to his servants, and having taken the form of a servant [Phil 2.7] and by nature and shape having been made man in order that the incomprehensible God might be comprehended by men,<sup>14</sup> through himself and in himself manifesting the radiance of [his] divine nature. For formerly he established man as a god in union with his own proper grace, when into the one newly formed<sup>15</sup> out of dust he breathed the spirit of life and shared his higher power and honored him with his own image and likeness and made him a citizen of Eden and a companion of angels. But since we darkened

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<sup>12</sup>*Sch.* 3: Showing man without beginning. . .” (ὁ δεικνύντος ἄνθρωπον ἀναρχον σωματικῶς κτιζόμενον ἄρχεσθαι), where from the words which follow directly it appears that after ἀναρχον should be added καὶ ἀναρχον [lit., “showing man without beginning, having been created bodily, to begin”; as amended by this note: “showing man without beginning, and without beginning, to begin by being created bodily.”] For through the [theological] figure of ἀντιδόσεως — the *idiomatum communicationem* — he assigns eternity to the humanity of Christ and a beginning of his coming forth to his divinity; because, to be sure, Christ by diverse consideration is eternal and had an origin of birth.

<sup>13</sup>Συγκατάβασιν, which might be translated “condescension” or “submission.” The 1577 Latin has *demissionem* and Migne *inclinationem*.

<sup>14</sup>Ὡς ἂν χωρηθεῖ Θεὸς ἀνθρώποις ἀχώρητος, which might be translated, “That the uncontainable God might be contained by men.”

<sup>15</sup>Here 1577 has νέον . . . πλαττόμενον. The accusative is almost certainly an error, so I have adopted instead Migne’s νέω . . . πλαττομένω.

and confounded the likeness of the divine image with the slime of the passions, he in compassion toward us has communicated a second communion much more steadfast and more marvelous than the former. For he indeed, while remaining in the majesty of his own proper Godhead partook of submission, in himself making human nature divine,<sup>16</sup> and united the archetype to the image, in which today he manifests his own proper beauty. And his face shines as the sun; by the hypostasis it is made identical with light immaterial, and thence it has become the Sun of Justice. And as snow his garments are whitened; for the vestment does not derive glory from the union but from relationship, and no longer by the hypostasis. And a cloud of light overshadowed him, depicting the brightness of the Spirit. For thus the divine Apostle spoke: that the sea bears an image of the water and the cloud of the Spirit. For all radiance and exceeding splendor of light are in those capable of receiving them and who have not tainted the soul with the filth of conscience.

5. Come then and let us [Col. 553] imitate the obedience of the disciples, and let us follow eagerly Christ's calling, and let us shake off the tumult<sup>17</sup> of the passions and let us confess without shame the Son of the living God,<sup>18</sup> and let us become beholders of his glory and hearers of things unspoken. For truly blessed, as the Lord said, are the eyes of those who see, because they see, and the ears of those [that hear] because they hear what many prophets and kings desired to see and to hear and could not [Mt 13.16-17]. Come then, in so far as we have been able to explain the divine oracles, let us set a table for you, our beautiful guests, who stretch out your hands wholly in yearning toward divine things. Let us set a table corresponding to your longing. Let us set a table of divine words with the grace of the Spirit as condiment, not falsely adorned with the wisdom of Greek oratory — seeing we are not overmuch instructed in that science but [rather are knowledgeable] of him who gives to the stammering

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<sup>16</sup>Θεουργῶν. Both Latin translations render this as *innovans*, “renewing.” The intent was almost certainly to tone down the Orthodox doctrine of theosis.

<sup>17</sup>Ὀχλον, which has as its primary meaning “mob” or “mob rule.” A political metaphor may be intended.

<sup>18</sup>Migne adds here, καὶ τῆς ἐπαγγελίας γεγονότες ἐπάξιοι πρὸς τὸ δρος τῶν ἀρετῶν τὴν ἀγάπην ἀναφοιτήσωμεν — “Having become worthy of that which is promised, let us ascend the mountain of virtues, which is charity.”



a clear tongue that relies on his grace to speak loud and clear.

6. In Caesarea Philippi (that Paneas,<sup>19</sup> which was once preeminent in name among cities, which was called by the name of Caesar Philip and in the sacred Scripture is called Dan,<sup>20</sup> for it says, “David numbered the people from Dan to Beersheba” — in this place<sup>21</sup> the Lord coming with his servants dried up the fountain of discharge of blood), in which he assembled the first synod of his own disciples; and improvising a chair upon a certain rock the Rock of Life asked his disciples saying, “Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?”<sup>22</sup> He who knows all things did not ask it because he was ignorant of the ignorance of men but because he wished to dispel this ignorance with the light of knowledge, [to remove] as it were some darkness covering the eyes of the mind. And they said, “Some proclaim you John the Baptist and some Elias and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” For since they beheld so great a depth of miracles they surmised he was one of the ancient prophets risen from the dead and hence deemed worthy of so great grace. And this is plain, for [the Scripture] says Herod the Tetrarch heard the fame of Jesus and said to his sons, “This is John the Baptist. He himself has risen from the dead, and therefore powers are at work in him” [Lk 9.7]. Undertaking to dispel this suspicion and to grant to the ignorant the true confession — like a gift, the most excellent gift of all — what did he who has all power in his hands? As man, indeed, he put the question, but as God he secretly made wise the first-called and the first to follow [Peter],<sup>23</sup> whom he determined in his

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<sup>19</sup>Sch. 4: “That Paneas”: Philip, brother of Herod, built a city in honor of Augustus at the foot of [Mount] Lebanon where the streams of Jordan and Dan [probably *Dan*; the text here is blurred] arise, and he called it Caesarea. Afterward, however, that city was called Paneas. On that account, however, it was called Caesarea Philippi so as to distinguish it from another Caesarea which Herod likewise named in honor of Augustus (since formerly it was named from the towers of Strato.)

<sup>20</sup>Sch. 5: “It is called Dan”: In the Greek codex here in place of δ’ ἂν I have placed δάν.

<sup>21</sup>Sch. 6: “In this place”: These words ought in my judgment to be stricken, not only because the Greek is corrupt; it is false that Christ here restored to health that woman who suffered from an issue of blood.

<sup>22</sup>Mk 8.27 and Mt 16.13

<sup>23</sup>Sch. 7: “The first called and the first to follow”: In this place, clearly for λαληθέντα [talked], I have not hesitated to restore κληθέντα [called],

own foreknowledge [Col 556] to be the worthy head of the Church. Into this one, as God, he breathed, and through him he spoke. But what was the question? "Whom say ye that I am?" And Peter, kindled with burning zeal and inspired by the Holy Spirit: "Thou art the Christ," he said, "the Son of the living God." O blessed mouth! O wholly blessed lips! O soul speaking of God! O mind bearing God,<sup>24</sup> worthy of instruction in the divine mysteries! O instrument through which the Father was proclaimed! Blessed truly art thou, Simon son of Jonas (for this indeed he who is free of falsehood proclaimed), for neither flesh nor blood nor human intellection, but the Father in heaven revealed to thee this divine and ineffable knowledge of God [cf. Mt 16.17]. For no one knows the Son except him who is known only by [the Son], the Father who begat him, and the Holy Spirit who knows the deep things of God [cf. 1 Cor 2.10]. This is that faith, steadfast and unmoved, upon which as upon a rock the Church is established, of which you [Peter] worthily bear the eponym. The gates of Hades, the mouths of heretics, the instruments of demons will attack this but they will not prevail; they will arm themselves, but they will not pillage. Their strokes have become a child's arrow and will remain so,<sup>25</sup> for he works evil against himself who resists the truth. This [Church] he procured with his own blood and entrusts it to thee [O Peter] as his most trusted servant. Preserve this [Church] unshaken and peaceful by thy prayers, for that it will never be turned nor shaken nor pillaged is [our] steadfast belief. Christ said it — Christ through whom heaven was established and earth made firm and remains unshaken. For "by the Word of the Lord were the heavens established" [Ps 32 (33).6], said the Holy Spirit. But let us pray that the waves be calmed, the tumult shattered,<sup>26</sup> and peace tranquil and serene

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according to the sense demanded. [Though Andrew is habitually referred to as the "first-called," Peter is clearly intended here.]

<sup>24</sup>Ω Θεολόγου ψυχῆς, ὃ θεοφόρου νοῦ (Migne omits the first phrase). I have relied on Lampe for both renderings. More freely: "O divinely inspired soul! O divinely inspired mind!"

<sup>25</sup>Literally, "and will be" — ἔσονται. At this point Migne adds, ἀσθενήσουσιν αὐτῶν αἱ γλῶσσαι· καὶ ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἔσονται. "Their tongues will become weak and betray them."

<sup>26</sup>To speak of shattering a tumult seems odd, but that is what the Greek says. There seems no other legitimate way to translate καταθραυσθῆναι. The 1577 Latin has *comprimatur* and Migne's *sedetur*.

granted us. Seek this earnestly from Christ, her spotless bridegroom, who declared you the keeper of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, who favored you with the power to bind and loose punishments, whom with an inspired mouth you proclaimed verily to be the Son of the living God. O divine and ineffable things! He proclaimed himself the Son of Man, and Peter (or rather he who was speaking in Peter) proclaimed him the Son of God. For he is truly God and man, and is not called [the son] of Peter nor of Paul nor of Joseph nor of any father but of man: for he had no father on earth who had no mother in heaven.

7. Desiring therefore that the word be confirmed in action<sup>27</sup> and knowing what the all-accomplishing wisdom and power of God would do, in which are hidden all the treasures of knowledge, he said, “There are some of those standing here who will not taste of death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom,” [Lk 9.27]. Now, if he had spoken of one person [Col 557] — “There is *one* of those standing here”<sup>28</sup> — we would surmise he was revealing the same thing as that which he said concerning John the Theologian: “If I will that he remain until I come, what is that to thee?” [Jn 21.22] — to the effect that he should remain without tasting death until the Second Coming of Christ (for thus some now of the over wise have understood that passage).<sup>29</sup> But since the Word has revealed that several would see (and that is what happened), he will not give an opportunity to those who wish thus to understand the meaning of what he said. “Verily” he said, “there are some of those standing here” [cf. Mt 16.28]. Why were some and not all of equal favor? Were not all disciples and apostles? Did not all when they were called, follow alike? Did not all receive an equal gift of healing? And [why were] not all alike also deemed worthy of looking upon this exceeding vision? Is not the master without respect of persons? All are disciples, but not all are blinded with the disease of avarice. All are disciples, but not all are deprived of the sharp sight of the eye by the rheum of slander. All

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<sup>27</sup>“Εργῶ τοῖνυν τὸν λόγον πιστωθῆναι. Billius’s Latin has *Itaque fidem sermoni per opus conciliare*, “to unite faith to word through work” — a translation which probably reflects the sixteenth-century Western preoccupation with the relation between faith and works and was probably not John of Damascus’s intention.

<sup>28</sup>Italics added.

<sup>29</sup>“That passage” is Migne’s ἐκεῖνο, not found in 1577.

are disciples, but not all are traitors. All are apostles, but all are not entangled in the noose of despair,<sup>30</sup> correcting evil with evil. All are lovers of Christ, but one a lover of silver — Judas the Iscariot — one only unworthy of the sight of the Godhead. “Let the impious one be taken away,” he said, “that he may not see the glory of the Lord.” One alone then was severed from the rest, who being both envious and slanderous was inflamed to greater madness. But it was necessary for all to be [beholders] of his glory who afterward would behold the spectacle of his passion. Hence he took with him the chiefs of the apostles as witnesses of his proper glory and splendor. They were three in number, hinting at the holy mystery of the Trinity and because [2 Cor 13.2] by two or three witnesses every word shall be established. In this way he removes from the traitor any pretext for considering himself betrayed;<sup>31</sup> but he discloses to his disciples his own proper Godhead. For [Judas] seeing Andrew remaining with the rest below was not able to say as pretext of defence that because the vision did not come to him he was compelled to betray the Master. For this reason Andrew remained below and all the rest of the choir of the apostles, set apart bodily in location but united in the bond of charity and in the quickening of the soul.<sup>32</sup>

8. “And after six days,” the divine Evangelists Matthew and Mark write. But Luke, the most wise,<sup>33</sup> said, “And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings.” Accurately and truly both *eight* and *six* are announced by the heralds of truth. Neither is there discord in these words but rather [Col 560] concord wrought by the same Spirit; for they themselves were not speaking, but the Spirit of God that spoke in them. For “when the Paraclete comes,” He said, “he will teach

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<sup>30</sup>Sch. 8: “Entangled in the noose . . .” For the word I have transfixed [*transfixi* — *sic?*] *laqueo* (“noose”). For περιπειρόμενοι was corruptly read περιειρόμενοι in the same manner indeed as κακὸν for κακῶ. [This note makes little sense; it may itself be corrupt.]

<sup>31</sup>The Greek here is confusing: οὕτως ἀποκλείει μὲν τῷ προδότῃ τὰ τῆς προδοσίας ἐγκλήματα. Literally, “In this way he cuts off from the traitor the accusation of betrayal.” My interpretation is based on the immediately succeeding discussion.

<sup>32</sup>After *charity* Migne inserts κάτω μὲν τῷ σώματι διατρίβοντες, ἄνω δὲ τῷ πόθῳ τῷ διδασκάλῳ ἐπόμεινοι — “remaining in the body below but following upward in desire for [the master’s] teaching.”

<sup>33</sup>I take “the most wise” (σοφώτατος) to be an epithet rather than a suggestion that Luke was wiser than Matthew or Mark.

you [all things], and bring all things to your remembrance” [Jn 15.26, cf. Jn 16.13]. Those therefore who say “after *six* days” excluded the extremes — that is the first and the last [numbers] and counted the middle [ones]. But he who counts *eight* days took both extremes into account; for to number in both ways is customary among men. And *six* is accepted as the first and perfect number, for this one is made up of its own parts. For *three* is the half of this<sup>34</sup> and *two* the third and *one* the sixth, which, when brought together make it perfect. Hence the skillful in these matters call the number *six* perfect. But also in six days God by a word effected the constitution of all visible things. It is fitting that those be perfect who have seen the divine glory, that which surpasses all things, which is the only thing more than perfect and exceeding perfection. For he said, “Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect” [Mt 5.48]. And as for *eight* — it also bears the figure of the age to come; for the present life is concluded in seven ages. But in the eighth the life of the age to come is named, as Gregory, great in theology, said, explicating Solomon’s words, “Grant a part to seven” — alluding to the present life — “and also to eight” — alluding to the age to come. And it is fitting in the eighth that the things of the eighth be revealed in perfection.<sup>35</sup> For as the truly divine theologian Dionysios said, “Thus the Lord will be seen by his perfect servants after the manner in which he was seen by his apostles on Mount Thabor.”<sup>36</sup> So much for the numbering of the days.

9. But why did he take along Peter, James, and John? [He took] Peter wishing to show that the witness which he had witnessed truly had been witnessed to him from the Father, that he might believe his own testimony as the Heavenly Father revealed the witness to him, both as chief bishop and as receiving the government of the whole Church. He took James because he would suffer death for Christ before all the other apostles, would drink his cup and with his baptism be baptized.<sup>37</sup> He took John as the virginal and most pure

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<sup>34</sup>*Sch.* 9: “For three is the half of this”: Here also everyone sees that τούτου must replace τοῦτο, just as a little later κατοπτεύσαντας should replace καθυποπτεύσαντας.

<sup>35</sup>Ὀγδόη, Lat. *Octavus*. For the theological implications of the octave, see the entry for ὀγδόη in Lampe, which contains numerous Patristic citations. See also Jean Danielou’s chapter, “The Eighth Day,” in *The Bible and the Liturgy* (Ann Arbor, 1979), pp. 262-86.

<sup>36</sup>*On the Divine Names*, 1, 4.

<sup>37</sup>Here John of Damascus alludes to Mark 10.38, τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐγὼ

instrument of theology, so that after having beheld the eternal glory of God he might thunder: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" [Jn 1.1] — whence he is even named the Son of Thunder.

10. But why does he lead the disciples into a high mountain? Holy Scripture, speaking figuratively, names the virtues mountains. And of all the virtues charity is the apex and summit, for in it perfection is defined. For if one speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and if he have faith so that he may move mountains, and all knowledge and understand all [Col 561] mysteries and give his body to be burned and have not charity he is become a sounding brass or a noisy, empty, inarticulate cymbal and will be accounted as nothing [cf. 1 Cor 13.1-3].<sup>38</sup> It is necessary, therefore, for those who have left earthly things behind upon the earth and have transcended the body of humiliation and been raised aloft to the most high and divine watch tower of charity, thus to behold things unseen. For he who has come to the summit of charity, who in some fashion stands outside himself, discerns the undiscernible, and flying above the impeding darkness of the bodily cloud and having come into the clear, upper sky of the soul, he contemplates more clearly the Sun of Righeousness, even if he is not capable of being filled with the vision.<sup>39</sup> [One should] also pray alone, for the mother of prayer is peace, and prayer is the revelation of divine glory. For when we close off the perceptions of the senses and enter into converse with ourselves and God, being freed from the distraction<sup>40</sup> of the external world, we enter within

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βαπτίζομαι βαπτισθῆναι — literally, "to be baptized the baptism I am baptized." The text here reads, καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ βαπτισθῆσόμενον βάπτισμα. Ὑπὲρ presents a difficulty. A literal translation would require "baptized a baptism in his behalf," which is the sense of both Latin versions — 1577: *ipsius causa* and Migne: *propter ipsum*. I have simply treated αὐτοῦ as a possessive modifying *baptism* and ignored ὑπέρ.

<sup>38</sup>Sch. 10: "A noisy, empty, inarticulate cymbal": The Greek has here ἀλαλάζων δυσμενῆς, but without doubt corruptly. Unless someone brings forward a more suitable word for δυσμενῆς [hostile], I would consider διακενῆς [empty].

<sup>39</sup>Sch. 11: "Filled with the vision": For θείας, unless some other word is needed, I scarcely doubt that θέας should be the reading. Since, however, κατ' ἰδίαν τε follows directly after, it is clear that something is missing. [Literally, "By himself and to pray."]

<sup>40</sup>Περιοφῶς. Literally, "passing around." Lampe cites patristic use to

ourselves. Then we shall behold clearly the kingdom of God within ourselves [cf. 17.21]. For the kingdom of Heaven, which is the kingdom of God, is within us; Jesus our God proclaimed it. The servants prayed one way, the Master another. For servants in fear and desire approach the Lord by means of supplications, and prayer becomes an agent of the mind's flight to God and of unity [with him], nourishing and strengthening [the mind] through itself [i.e., prayer]. But the holy mind [of Jesus] which is united hypostatically to God the Word — how shall he pray? And how shall the Lord present himself when he prays?<sup>41</sup> It is clear that adopting our person and teaching us and making a way of ascent to God through prayer, and teaching how prayer is appointed an agent of the divine glory and showing that it is not hostile to God, but how honoring the Father as his own beginning and cause and making a way for flesh to go through its own nature, in order that through itself it might be strengthened and instructed and become initiated into and habituated to divine things.<sup>42</sup> But he did not deceive the Devil, who was watching carefully to see whether he was God; for the power of his miracles declared him to be. And because he is God,<sup>43</sup> things human mingle everywhere with things divine, as it were a fish hook hiding in some food. For thus he who deceived man with the hope of Godhead will be deceived fittingly by addition of flesh. For seeing him radiant as he prayed the face of the glorified Moses also came to the Devil's mind [cf. Ex 34.29.30];<sup>44</sup> but Moses was indeed glorified with a glory coming into existence from without, but the Lord Jesus did not have the acquired ornament of glory but the inborn glory of the Godhead.

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refer to the rotation of the heavenly bodies and to the cycle of time. John of Damascus may mean, being freed from the temporal or cyclical bondage of the external world. The context suggests as much.

<sup>41</sup>Παραστήσεται — literally, “How will the Lord, praying, stand beside?”

<sup>42</sup>I have rendered the syntax literally; the sentence in Greek is incomplete. I have translated ἀντίθεος as “hostile to God”; litotes is obviously intended. I have rendered διὰ τῆς οἰκειᾶς . . . φύσεως as “through its own nature,” in reference to the flesh; the point would seem to be that because of the Incarnation the flesh, *as flesh*, can be “initiated into and habituated to divine things.”

<sup>43</sup>Διὰ τοῦτο.

<sup>44</sup>Ἀνεμνήσθη. I have assumed that the Devil is doing the remembering, which seems the only logical inference from the context.

11. But by what title was he addressed? Let the prophet David teach you, who clearly says: "He himself shall call me: Thou art my Father, my God and the helper of my salvation" [Ps 88 (89).27]. First "Father," in as much as [he is Father,] of God, even of the Son before the ages, and of the radiant creator of being; then "God and helper for salvation," as incarnate and [Col 564] [renewing] our nature in himself [causing it to mount up to the original beauty of the image, and bearing in himself], the common person of [our] humanity.<sup>45</sup> Wherefore he adds, "And I will make him my firstborn" [Ps 88 (89).28]. For he is called the firstborn among many brethren who like us had partaken of flesh and blood. As God the Word, the Son, who always exists, he was not born afterward, but as man he is said to be born afterwards also, that the property of Sonship might remain unaltered in himself.<sup>46</sup> Since he himself was made flesh when the flesh of the Son of God was made — from the very first moment of [its] existence in the hypostatic union — he is said to be made the firstborn<sup>47</sup> for though he is divine and he was made as man.

12. On Mount Thabor, therefore, taking [with him] those distinguished in the height of virtues, he was transfigured before them. He transfigured himself before the disciples, he who was always in like manner glorified and radiant in the effulgence of the Godhead. For indeed having been begotten of the Father in a manner without beginning, he has acquired the natural splendor-without-beginning of the Godhead, not afterwards to acquire being or further glory. For indeed he is from the Father, but eternally and atemporally, having

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<sup>45</sup>Sch. 12: "Bearing in himself the common person . . .": I thus translate this [ref. to the 1577, Latin trans.] as though the Greek read — καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν φύσιν ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπότητος πρόσωπον [ὑποδυσαμένου] or [ὑποδεξαμένου] — [and putting on (or taking to himself) our nature and the person of humanity]. For it is apparent that something of this kind is needed to fill out the sense. [Migne's note: "here the editions are mutilated and empty of sense." Migne does not explain the source of the interpolated material — "renewing" and "causing it to mount up . . .," which is not found in the 1577 text.]

<sup>46</sup>Here 1577 Latin has, *ut in eo filietatis proprietates ab omni mutatione aliena maneat*, "That in him the property of Sonship might remain alien to all mutation."

<sup>47</sup>The Greek merely has τοῦτο — "He is said to be made *this*." Πρωτότοκον is almost certainly the intended antecedent.



acquired his proper radiance of glory. And when he [was] made flesh, he is [still] himself, remaining in the same [condition] of the divine radiance; and the first indeed is glorified at the same time that it comes out of non-being into being and the glory of the Godhead becomes as well the glory of the body.<sup>48</sup> For Christ is one, both this and that — of the same substance as the Father and of the same nature and same race as we. And if, therefore, that holy body was never without a participation in the divine glory but from the very beginning of the hypostatic union it was enriched with the perfect glory of the invisible Godhead so that there might be one and the same glory of the Word and of the flesh, nevertheless the glory existing in the visible body was obscure and reckoned as invisible by those who do not comprehend things unseen even by angels, [namely] by prisoners of the flesh.<sup>49</sup> He was therefore transfigured, not by taking on that which he was not nor by changing into that which he was not, but by manifesting

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<sup>48</sup>Migne here has λέγεται for 1577's γίνεται. Vladimir Lossky translates, following Migne, "That the glory of the divinity *should be spoken of* also as the glory of the body," *The Vision of God*, trans. Asheleigh Moorhouse, (London, 1973), pp. 112-13. Almost certainly 1577 is correct.

Here Migne adds a note indicative of the divergence between East and West concerning the light on Tabor:  
[Migne's note 13, col. 563-64.]

These [words] seem more difficult, says Combesius (in a marginal annotation), unless you make a precise distinction, lest you fall into the worse error of certain Greeks concerning uncreated light: to wit of the Palamites, from whose opinions, however, our author is alien. He does not judge that glory or that light with which the flesh of Christ shone on the mountain to have been something uncreated, which was not God [i.e., he thinks the glory and the light on Tabor was something created and not divine]. But this is what he means: the divine nature, which was joined most intimately with the flesh of Christ, struck the interior eyes or mind of the disciples — although not in the perfect way in which the minds of the blessed behold it [the divine nature] but nevertheless in a unique and inexplicable manner. And this will become obvious from a careful reading of the context of the oration. This was indeed the opinion of other ancient Greeks as well, whose homilies concerning the Transfiguration of the Lord are extant along with this one in *Bibliotheca PP. concionatoria*.

<sup>49</sup>The Greek of this sentence is by no means clear: ἀλλ' ἀφανὴς ἡ δόξα ὑπάρχουσα ἐν τῷ φαινομένῳ σώματι, τοῖς μὴ χωροῦσι τὰ καὶ ἀγγέλοις ἀθέατα τῆς σαρκὸς δεσμίῳις, ἀόρατος ἐχρημάτιζε. Literally, "But the glory existing in the visible body was obscure and reckoned invisible by [or to] those not comprehending those things unseen even by the angels, by prisoners of the flesh."

to his own disciples (when he opens their eyes) that which he was. And this is the sense of, "he was transfigured before them"; for although he himself remained exactly the same,<sup>50</sup> he now appeared to his disciples as something different from what he seemed before.

13. "And his face shone as the sun" — he who in his great power illuminated the sun; he who created the light before the sun and afterward devised the sun as a luminary, a holder of light. For he himself is the true light, begotten everlastingly and immaterially [Col 565] from the light, the hypostatic Word of the Father, the splendor of the glory, the essential image of the hypostasis of God, even of the Father — the face of this one shone as the sun. What are you saying, O Evangelist? Why do you compare things essentially incomparable? Why have you placed side by side and put together things which cannot by their nature be put together? Did the Lord shine as a servant? The light unbearable and unapproachable — how did this one, who dazzled, appear as the sun which is beheld by all? But I do not liken nor compare, he answers, the only-begotten and incomparable radiance of the divine glory; but speaking to those bound by the flesh I take as an example whatever is most beautiful and most radiant among bodies — not as wholly of the same essence, for it is altogether impossible to represent the uncreated being in the created.<sup>51</sup> But just as the sun is one but has two beings — that of the light, which was made formerly, and that of the body which came later in the creation — but through the whole body, the body remaining as it is,<sup>52</sup> the light everlasting is united [to it] and spreads to the ends of the world; even so Christ, the unbeginning and unapproachable light from light, having come into being in a temporal and created body, is a

<sup>50</sup> Ἐν ταυτότητι. Lat., *ipse manens*.

<sup>51</sup> Sch. 13: "To represent the uncreated being in the created": Those expert in the Greek tongue would have seen what ἀπαραλέπτως means. [In other words ἀπαραλέπτως (no such word) is an error for ἀπαραλείπτως]. Ἀπαραλείπτως has, to be sure, a sense not altogether to be rejected [i.e., "altogether" as in Migne]. I, however, would prefer the reading ἀπαραλλάκτως [indistinguishably" or "without distinction"] because I see both Basil and Gregory Nazianzen are accustomed always to employ this word when they wish to signify absolute similitude in all respects [*numeris* (?) the text is blurred]. Similarly Basil himself says he will not disapprove that ὁμοιούσιον, which certain of the Arian faction [used] in order to spread abroad their error more plausibly, provided ἀπαραλλάκτως was added. For he, indeed, concluded that ὁμοιούσιον ἀπαραλλάκτως was equivalent to ὁμοούσιον.

<sup>52</sup> Ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ, Lat., *in seipso manente*.

light, having come into being in a temporal and created body, is a single Sun of Justice, one Christ known in two inseparable natures; for indeed even that holy body was circumscribed; being placed in Thabor he did not reach beyond the mountain, but his Godhead is without limitation of place, being in all things and beyond all things. And the *body* shines as the sun, for the radiance of the light was *of the body*.<sup>53</sup> For all things belonging to the one infleshed divine Word were shared in common, both the things of the flesh and of the uncircumscribed Godhead; but these things which we discern as common — the honorable distinction of glory and the passibility — have different sources.<sup>54</sup> But the divinity conquers and gives its own radiance and glory to the body while it remains among the passions without partaking of them. Only so “his face shone as the sun” — not that he was not more brilliant than the sun, but only so much could the beholders see. For if he had revealed all the splendor of his glory, how would they not have been consumed? “His face shone as the sun”; for as the sun is, among things perceived by the senses, so is God among things perceived by the intellect. “And his garments became white as the light.” For just as the sun is one thing — for it is a fountain of light which it is impossible to look upon directly — and the light which comes from it to earth is another; even so God is seen and discerned in the operation of his wisdom and charity, lest we be wholly without participation in the Good.<sup>55</sup> Thus his

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<sup>53</sup>Italics added.

<sup>54</sup>The Greek here is confusing, and literal translation does not produce coherent English: *ἕτερον δὲ ἐξ οὗ κοινὰ τὰ τῆς δόξης αὐχήματα, καὶ ἕτερον ἐξ οὗ κοινὰ τὰ πάθη γνωρίζεται*. Lit., “And one thing that from which the honorable distinction of glory [is] common, and another from which the passion is known to be common.” My paraphrase seems to render the intended meaning. Losky translates this clause as follows: “However we see that the glory that was shared has a different source than the passibility that shared.” (p. 113).

<sup>55</sup>*Ὁρᾶται γὰρ καὶ προσβλέπεται Θεοῦ σοφίας καὶ φιланθρωπίας ἐνεργεία*. I have paraphrased for the sake of what seems to be the intended sense. The syntax suggests that the subject of *ὁρᾶται* and *προσβλέπεται* should be the sun’s light. But that seems illogical in view of the rest of the sentence. The point seems to be that just as the sun is one thing and its light reaching down to earth is another, so God is one thing and his wisdom and charity by which man discerns him is, if not another, at least distinct in some way from God’s essence. Given *ἐνεργεία*, which I have translated “operation,” John of Damascus probably intends the distinction between divine essence and divine energies, for which the distinction between the sun and its light serves as an analogy.

face shines most clearly as the sun, and his garments are white as light, having been adorned by a participation in the divine light.

14. Thus these things were accomplished so that the Lord might be shown to be Lord both of the old and new covenants and that the mouths of heretics, whose throats are like a sepulchre, might be stopped and resurrection of the dead believed in [col 568] and that he who was witnessed to [by the Father]<sup>56</sup> might be believed to be master of the living and the dead. Moses and Elias, as servants to the Master, stand beside him in glory, and they are seen by their fellow servants speaking to him: for it was necessary for these, having beheld the glory and freedom of address of those who were their fellow-servants and followers of God, to be astounded at the kind condescension of the Lord and to strive more zealously to be strengthened for the contests. For whoever sees the fruits of [his] labors would most readily dare the struggles. For the passion for gain is able to result in harshness to the body. For just as soldiers and boxers and farmers and merchants lay hold of their labors with that great enthusiasm of theirs, and they venture upon the waves of the sea and have no care for pirates,<sup>57</sup> so long as they acquire the desired gain; and the more they see those who have previously toiled revelling in their gains, the more they are incited to endure their toils. So also the spiritual shieldbearers and boxers and farmers and merchants of the Master, not longing after earthly grain nor reaching out for transient goods when they behold things lying in hope before their eyes and those who have already labored enjoying the delights of those hoped for goods, [then] with more ardent spirit they prepare themselves for the struggles, not drawn up in battle against men, nor flaying the air, nor leading plowing oxen under the yoke and with these cutting the furrows of the earth, nor sailing the wave of the sea, but contending against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, rejoicing in being beaten, gathering wealth when they are despoiled, to the overwhelming waves of the world and to the spirits of evil which impel them opposing the rudder of the cross, vanquishing as it were roaring and devouring beasts by the power of the Spirit, sowing in the hearts of man as in furrows the

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<sup>56</sup>The insertion is Migne's.

<sup>57</sup>*Sch.* 14: "For pirates": For θηρατῶν [hunters] I read πειρατῶν [pirates]. (Migne reads, καὶ θηρῶν, καὶ πειρατῶν, "for beasts or pirates.")

word of piety, and reaping bountiful grain in the Lord.<sup>58</sup> But let us return to our subject.

15. Then Moses, as seems probable, proclaimed: “Hear, O spiritual Israel, what the Israel of the senses has not been able to hear: the Lord thy God is one Lord — one God known in three hypostases. For the essence is one — of the Father who testifies, of the Son who is testified to, and of the overshadowing Spirit. This is the one who is now borne witness to by the Father, [the one who is] the Life of men. Ignorant men will see that Life hanging upon the tree, and they will not believe in their Life.” Then Elias also responded: “This is he whom, as in thin air, without body in the spirit, I looked upon of old [Col 569]. For no one has ever seen God as he is in his own nature. And what [one] has seen, he has seen in [the] Spirit” [cf. 1 Jn 1.1-2]. “This is the change of the right hand of the most high.”<sup>59</sup> These are the things which the eye has not seen and the ear has not heard and which have never entered into the heart of man. Thus in the age to come we shall always be with the Lord, beholding Christ refulgent in the light of the Godhead.

16. But why was Peter made a spectator of this divine apocalypse? As if inspired by the Spirit, he said to the Lord, “It is good for us to be here.” And no wonder: he exchanges darkness for light.<sup>60</sup> You see this sun [of ours] — how beautiful, how seasonable, how sweet, how desirable, how radiant, how shining; and our life — how sweet and lovely, that all cleave to, and they do everything that they may not miss it. How much more desirable and sweeter do you suppose that Light to be from which all light shines? or that very Life itself from which all life exists and is imparted, in which we all live and

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<sup>58</sup>*Sch.* 15: “Reaping bountiful grain . . .”: (τὸν στάχυν προσανιμώμενοι); προσανιμώμενοι nevertheless seems to me more apt because the other word [προσανιμώμενοι] is used concerning things which are drawn out of low places into high. (Migne makes this correction.)

<sup>59</sup>This is a direct rendering of Psalm 76 (77): 10. ἀλλοίωσις can only be rendered as *change* (Lat., *mutatio*) though the sense is not clear. The usual English translation (Coverdale and KJV) is “the years of the right hand of the Most High.”

<sup>60</sup>Τίς γὰρ ζόφον φωτὸς ἀνταλλάσσειται; — “For who exchanges darkness for light.” One would have expected, “For who exchanges light for darkness?” I have followed the 1577 Latin: *Nec mirum. Caliginem enim cum luce commutat.*

move and are [Acts 17.28]? How much more lovely and more pleasant! It is not altogether sweet? Is it not wholly desirable? Nor is there word nor thought [which can] comprehend the measure of its preeminence. It defies all comparison and exceeds [all] measure.<sup>61</sup> How could the uncircumscribed be measured when it cannot be comprehended by thought itself? This [is] the Light [which] wins the victory over all of nature. This is the Life which has conquered the cosmos: how, therefore, is it not good not to be separated from the Good? Peter did not, therefore, speak absurdly; but since all things are good in their time and since there is a time for everything, as Solomon said [cf. Eccl 3.1-8], it was necessary that the beauty not be limited only to those there but that the good should be poured out upon and extend to all (believers, of course), so that there may be many who partake of [its] benefit. And this the cross and passion and death was about to fulfil. [So] it was not good for him to remain there, since he was going to redeem Peter's own proper image with his own blood,<sup>62</sup> for which purpose he was incarnated. If thou hadst remained in Thabor, the promise to thee [O Peter] would not have been fulfilled. Thou wouldst not have become key-bearer of the kingdom; Paradise would not have been opened to the thief, nor would the haughty king of death have been conquered, nor would the kingdom of Hades have been given to plunder, nor would Adam have been restored to salvation, nor would Eve have been redeemed, nor would the patriarchs and prophets and the just have been rescued from the recesses of Hades, nor would nature have been invested with incorruption.<sup>63</sup> If Adam had not sought theosis before the due time, he would have

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<sup>61</sup>Καὶ μέτροις οὐκ ὑπερβάλλεται — literally, “and it is not exceeded by limitations.”

<sup>62</sup>Οὐ καλὸν μένειν αὐτόθι τὸν τῷ ἰδίῳ αἵματι πλάσμα τὸ οἰκεῖον ἐξαγοράσαντα — literally, “not good for him to remain there who was going to redeem his own image with his own blood.” My translation is based on the assumption that the image (πλάσμα) alluded to is Peter's. In other words, it was not good for Christ to follow Peter's suggestion and remain on Thabor since it was Peter's own proper image (i.e., the image of God in which Peter was created and therefore proper to him) which Christ by his blood was going to redeem.

<sup>63</sup>Here both Latin versions register a characteristic Western distaste for the Orthodox emphasis on renewal of the cosmos in the Resurrection, limiting the statement by adding *humana*: “nor would *human* nature have been invested with incorruption.”

attained his desire. Do not seek the good before its time, O Peter. There will come a time when thou wilt receive that vision [and keep it] forever. The Lord did not constitute thee a governor of tabernacles but of a pancosmic Church. Thy disciples, thy sheep, whom the good Chief-Shepherd put into thy hands, put thy words into action, building a tabernacle for Christ and for Moses [Col 572] and Elias, His attendants today.<sup>64</sup> Not consciously did Peter speak these things, but by the inspiration of the Spirit foretelling the things to come. For he did not know what he was saying, as the most divine Luke says; and Mark adds the reason — for, he said, they were terrified. When Simon said these things, behold “a shining cloud overshadowed them,” [Mk 9.7], and the disciples were oppressed by greater fear, beholding Jesus the Savior and Lord with Moses and Elias within the cloud [cf. Ex 19.9].

17. In the past the beholder of God went under the divine darkness, suggesting the shadowy character of the Law. For the Law had a shadow of things to come, not the truth itself [cf. Heb 10.1], as one may hear from the writer Paul. And at that time Israel was not able to look intently at the glory of Moses’ face, a glory which was being abolished [cf. 2 Cor 3.13]; but we with face unveiled behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, being transfigured<sup>65</sup> from glory into greater glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. And henceforth the cloud is not a cloud of darkness, but it overshadows with light. For the mystery hidden from the ages and generations has been unveiled, and glory unbroken and enduring eternally has been manifested. And for that reason Moses was at hand along with Elias [the two of them] fulfilling the role<sup>66</sup> of the law and the prophets. For whom the law and the prophets heralded — this is found to be Jesus, the giver of life. And Moses indeed signifies the assembly of the saints asleep of old and Elias that of the living. For [Christ] is the transfigured Lord of the living and the dead. Moses entered into the land of promise; for Jesus, dispenser of inheritances, led him. And what he saw of old in a figure, today is beheld plainly. For this is suggested by the brilliance of the cloud.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup>Here Migne adds, ἐν οἷς πανηγυρίζομεν, “in which we keep festival.”

<sup>65</sup>Μεταμορφούμενοι. 2 Cor 3.18 has μεταμορφούμεθα. KJV renders this as “changed,” but St. Paul probably intended an allusion to the Transfiguration or Metamorphosis.

<sup>66</sup>Πρόσωπον.

<sup>67</sup>Since Moses did not enter the land of promise in his mortal life, John

18. And there came a voice speaking out of the cloud: "This is my beloved Son"; this visible man is my beloved Son, [who] only yesterday became man, living a poor man amongst us, whose face now shines. "This is my Son, my well-beloved," who is before the ages, the Alone, only begotten of the Alone, who atemporally and eternally has proceeded from me, the Father, who is from me and in me and with me, always existing, and not coming after;<sup>68</sup> from me as from paternal cause and begotten of my substance and hypostasis. Wherefore he is consubstantial [with me.] In me as begotten without division and inseparable; with me as hypostasis existing complete in himself, and not a word uttered and dispersed in air. And for that very reason I call him well-beloved, and in this one I am well-pleased.<sup>69</sup> For by the good will of the Father he wrought pancosmic salvation in his only-begotten Son; the good will of the Father welded together the union of all things in the only-begotten Son. For since man is by nature a little cosmos, bearing in himself the conjunction of all substance, both visible and invisible — for [man] is both these things — truly the Lord and Creator and Ruler of all things was pleased to become in his only-begotten and consubstantial Son the connection of Godhead and manhood and through this [to become the union] of all created things, so that God might be the all in all. This is my Son, the reflection of my glory [cf. Heb 1.3], the express image of my person through whom I have also made the angels, through whom the heaven is established and the earth made firm, who brings forth all things by the word of his power and by the breath of his mouth [cf. Ps 32 (33).6] — which is to say, obviously, by the Spirit, who is author of life and ruler. Hear him [Mk 9.7]! For whoso receives

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of Damascus must refer to his having entered with Jesus in the Resurrection when the Old Testament saints were released from Hades and brought into Paradise. What Moses "saw of old in a figure" must therefore refer to his view of the promised land from Nebat, for what he beholds plainly is certainly the fulfillment of the promise to Israel in Christ.

<sup>68</sup>Οὐκ ἐφυστερίζων τὴν ὑπαρξιν — literally, "not coming *after* the subsistence."

<sup>69</sup>*Sch.* 16: "In this one I am well-pleased": In Greek either this word, ἀγαπητόν, must be deleted or καλῶ [sic] καὶ added to complete the sense.

After ἀγαπητόν and before ἐν τούτῳ εὐδόκησα Migne inserts: τίς γὰρ υἱὸς ἀγαπητός, ὥς ὁ μονογενής; the whole sequence therefore reads, "And for that reason he is well beloved. For what son is well-beloved if not the only begotten?" I have translated 1577, incorporating καλῶ . . . καί.



him receives me — the one who sent him — not as a master but as a father. For as man was he sent but as God he remains in me and I in him. Whoever does not honor my only-begotten and well-beloved Son does not honor the Father — me who sent him. Hear him! For he has the words of eternal life [Jn 6.68]. This is the consummation of the perfected things, this is the power of the mystery.

19. What then? He sent Moses and Elias away to their proper places and was seen by the apostles alone<sup>70</sup> and thus they came down out of the mountain saying nothing to anyone of the things seen and heard; for this the Lord commands. For what reason and purpose I shall say: He understood, I believe, that the disciples were imperfect; for they had not yet attained the perfect participation of the Spirit. [Therefore he commanded silence]<sup>71</sup> so that grief might not fill their hearts, so that the raging madness of jealousy might not drive the betrayer mad. Come, therefore, let us also make an end to the subject of these words.

20. But may you always remember [these] words, carrying in your hearts the beauty of that vision, having the voice of the Father always ringing in your ears: this one is not a servant, not an ambassador, not an angel, but my beloved Son; hear him! Therefore let us hear him saying: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart” [Mk 12.30]. “Thou shalt not kill,” not even be angry rashly with thy brother. First reconcile thyself to thy brother and, coming thus, offer thy gift. “Thou shalt not commit adultery” [Mt 5.21-28]) nor even be inquisitive about another’s beauty. “Thou shalt not forswear thyself,” nor even swear at all. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil [cf. Mt 5.33-37]. “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” “Thou shalt not steal” [Lk 18.20]. But rather give to him who begs of thee, and do not turn aside from one who wishes to borrow, and do not hinder his taking [Lk 6.30]. “Love thine enemies, bless those who curse you, do good [Col 576] to those who hate you, and pray for those who despitefully use you and persecute you. Judge not, lest you be judged. Forgive and it shall be forgiven you, that yet may be [the sons of your Father, perfect and]<sup>72</sup> merciful as your Father in heaven [is merciful], for

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<sup>70</sup>*Sch.* 17: “Was seen by the Apostles alone” In Greek, μόνοις; but μόνος seems more suitable to the thought.

<sup>71</sup>This clause is made up out of whole cloth for the sake of English sense.

<sup>72</sup>This phrase is added in Migne.

he makes his sun to rise on the wicked and the good and sends his rain on the just and the unjust'' [Lk 6.27-28]. Let us observe these divine ordinances with all care so that we too may delight in his divine beauty, being filled with the most sweet taste of him, insofar as this is now obtainable to those burdened with this earthly tabernacle of the body; but in the future more clearly and more purely, when the just shall shine as the sun, when, being delivered from the necessities of the body, they shall be incorruptible, like angels, with the Lord in the great and manifest revelation from the heavens of our very Lord and God and our Savior Jesus Christ, to whom belong glory and majesty, now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

# A Song Concerning the Transfiguration of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of which the First Letters of the Verses Comprise these Words: “Moses Saw the Face of God on Thabor.”<sup>1</sup>

## Canticle 1

Moses having beheld of old with prophetic eyes the glory of the Lord in the sea, in the cloud, and in the pillar of fire, exclaimed: Let us sing to our Redeemer and our God.

Moses protected by a deified body as by a rock, beholding him who cannot be beheld, exclaimed: Let us sing to our Redeemer and our God.

On the mountain of the Law and on Thabor thou didst reveal thyself to Moses: of old in a cloud but now in light, by the approach of thy divinity.<sup>2</sup>

## Canticle 3

That glory which formerly overshadowed in the tabernacle and spoke familiarly with thy servant Moses was a figure. O Lord, of thy Transfiguration, which shone on Thabor in an ineffable fashion.

With thee, O only-begotten and supreme Word, the foremost apostles ascended into Mount Thabor. And with thee were present also, O only beneficent one, Moses and Elias as servants of God.

Being wholly God, thou didst become wholly man, having mixed humanity with the wholeness of thy Godhead in thy hypostasis, which in two essences Moses and Elias saw on Thabor.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The acronym works with the Greek letters. This hymn in in fact the second canon for the Orthros for the Transfiguration (August 6); Jacobus Billius probably did not understand its liturgical function, for in his translation he ignores the division into canticles. I have restored these, but I have followed the Latin version where it differs from the Greek.

<sup>2</sup>I suspect an error here in the Latin; the Greek reads, “In the unapproachable light of thy divinity.”

<sup>3</sup>Here I have followed the Greek, for the Latin is almost certainly in error: *Totus Deus existens, totus Deus factus . . . Homo* was almost certainly intended in place of the second *Deus*; with that change, Greek and Latin versions become identical.

Canticle 4

From thy flesh rays of divinity flowed to the prophets and apostles. Wherefore the excellent men, singing, exclaimed: Glory to thy power O Lord.

Thou who hast preserved unharmed a bush united with fire hast shown thy divinely illuminated flesh to Moses, who sings: Glory to thee O Lord.

The sun falling here on the sense was eclipsed by the ray of thy divinity, when, my Jesus, it beheld thee on Mount Thabor.<sup>4</sup> Glory to thy power O Lord.

An immaterial fire was seen consuming the matter of the body.<sup>5</sup> Thus thou, O Master, wast visible to Moses and to the apostles and to Elias, one [person] out of two [natures] and in two natures perfect.

Canticle 5

No eloquence of tongue is able to declare thy mighty works. Indeed as ruler of life and lord of death thou on Mount Thabor hast shown Moses and Elias [to be] witnesses of thy divinity.

Thou, O Christ, who with invisible hands hath fashioned man after thine image, hast [now] displayed the archetype of thy beauty in that which thou hast fashioned — not as in an image but as thou art by essence, God and man.

In union without confusion, thou hast shown to us the [live] coal of [thy] divinity, which consumes sins but brings light to the soul. Wherefore Moses and Elias and the chief of the disciples were enraptured in ecstasy on Mount Thabor.

Canticle 6

How great and fearful the spectacle which occurred on this very day. Out of heaven shone the visible sun, but out of earth the incomparable Sun of Justice on Mount Thabor.

The shadow of the Law, having grown weak, passed away: but

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<sup>4</sup>Greek, The visible sun was eclipsed by the rays of divinity when it saw thee, my Jesus, transfigured on Mount Thabor.

<sup>5</sup>Here there is almost certainly an error in the Latin; the Greek says an immaterial fire was seen *not* consuming the matter of the body.

Christ, who is truth, hath plainly come. Moses, having beheld thy divinity on the mountain, shouted out.

A pillar [of fire] signified to Moses Christ transfigured, and a cloud, which overshadowed on Thabor, showed plainly the grace of the Spirit.

#### Canticle 7

Now things never [before] seen are seen by the apostles, divinity indisputable, shining in flesh on Mount Thabor — [by the apostles] who exclaim: Blessed art thou, O Lord God unto the ages.

In wonder before the divine beauty of the Kingdom the apostles on Mount Thabor quaked with fear, exclaiming: Blessed art thou, O Lord God unto the ages.

Now are heard things never [before] heard. For he who without father was born of a Virgin, by a paternal voice is gloriously witnessed [to be] at the same time God and man unto the ages.

Not by adoption and grace hast thou been made the Son of the Most High. But since thou wert the beloved Son; without any mutation thou hast dwelt with us: Blessed art thou, O Lord God unto the ages.

#### Canticle 8

Thy disciples, O Lord, when they had heard testimony from the Father bearing witness to thee and were by no means able to look upon the lightning brightness of thy countenance since it was too strong for human sight, fell upon the ground, singing in fear: Ye children, bless, ye priests praise, ye people exalt him above all unto all the ages.

Of those who rule kingdoms thou art the most beautiful king, and of those who have dominion everywhere [thou art] the Lord and blessed prince and dost dwell in inaccessible light. To whom the disciples, stricken with wonder, cried: Ye children bless, ye priests praise, ye people exalt him above all unto all the ages.

To thee, O Christ, ruling in heaven, exercising power in the kingdom of earth, and obtaining subterranean dominion, from the earth the apostles stood beside thee, from heaven Elias the Tishbite, and from among the number of the dead, Moses — singing with one accord: Ye children, bless, ye priests praise, ye people exalt him above all unto all the ages.

Cares, parents of sloth, O Good One, were left upon earth by the elect of the apostles as soon as they followed thee to a sublime and divine manner of living. Wherefore also, as was fitting, having been made partakers of the vision of thy divinity,<sup>6</sup> they sang: Ye children bless, ye priests praise, ye people exalt him above all unto all the ages.

Canticle 9

In order that thou mightest show openly thy mysterious Second Coming, by that means, to be sure, the High God, standing in the midst of gods, will be seen by the apostles, to Moses and to Elias, in a mode surpassing utterance, thou didst shine on Thabor.<sup>7</sup> Wherefore we all invest thee, O Christ, with great praises.

Come now, O people, and ascend into the holy and supercelestial mountain; let us stand spiritually in the city of the living God, and let us behold with our minds the immaterial divinity of the Father and the Spirit shining in the only begotten Son.

With desire thou hast enthralled me, O Christ, and with thy divine love thou hast changed me. But consume my sins with an immaterial fire and deign to fill me with desires that rest in thee, that exulting in joy I may proclaim, O Good One, thy two advents.

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<sup>6</sup>The Greek here says, "of thy *theophany*."

<sup>7</sup>Greek, "how the High God will be seen standing in the midst of [the] gods, to the apostles on Thabor, to Moses with Elias, thou didst shine in an ineffable manner."

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## Melito of Sardis: Hermeneutic and Context

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ANDREW MICHAEL MANIS

AN EFFORT TO TRACK DOWN THE PARTICULARS OF THE LIFE and work of the second-century bishop of Sardis, Melito, requires an arduous but fascinating piece of detective work. While it must be admitted that he is hardly a key figure of the patristic period, Melito does provide an example of typological exegesis within the context of early Christian preaching. His *Paschal Homily* ranks with 2 Clement as perhaps the earliest examples of Christian preaching in the second century and sheds light on the style and content of early sermons.<sup>1</sup> One might indeed speculate on the importance Melito might have for patristic study were his voluminous writings still extant.<sup>2</sup>

The goal of this study of Melito's *Paschal Homily* is to investigate its use of scripture and its hermeneutic, with a view toward explaining the contextual influences which formulated that hermeneutic. Several problems immediately arise, however, to make such a task difficult. First, very little of Melito's life is known to scholars. Our information about him is limited to the writings of Eusebios and one quote from Tertullian. Second, though they were quite numerous, his writings have been lost. Scholars are thus restricted to various

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<sup>1</sup>Richard C. White, "Melito of Sardis: Earliest Christian Orator," *Lexington Theological Quarterly* 2 (July, 1967) 82-83.

<sup>2</sup>Eusebios, *Ecclesiastical History* 4.26.1-2 lists Melito's sixteen writings as follows: Two treatises *On the Pascha*, *On the Conduct and the Prophets*, *On the Church*, *On the Lord's Day*, *On the Faith of Man*, *On Creation*, *On the Subjection of the Sense to Faith*, *On the Soul and Body or Mind*, *On Baptism and Truth and Faith and the Birth of Christ*, *Book of Prophecy*, *On Soul and Body*, *On Hospitality*, *The Key*, *On the Devil and the Apocalypse of John*, *On the Corporeality of God*, and the petition *To Antonios*.



fragments<sup>3</sup> and his one complete work, the *Paschal Homily*. Third, almost no studies have been done of the context of Melito's homily. One scholar who has broken ground in this area is A. T. Kraabel in his study, "Melito the Bishop and the Synagogue at Sardis: Text and Context."<sup>4</sup> Kraabel is Professor of Classics at the University of Minnesota and, from 1970 to 1972, he served as Associate Director of the Joint Archaeological Expedition to Upper Galilee, Israel. As a trained archaeologist, he has utilized the findings of Professor George M. A. Hanfmann's excavations of ancient Sardis. This 1962 expedition uncovered an elaborate synagogue at that site. From this Kraabel has been able to construct two hypotheses for a "social location" for the *Paschal Homily* of Melito. While generally agreeing with his suggestion, this paper will seek to respond to Kraabel's hypotheses by narrowing his focus and by extending his work to include a discussion of how Melito's context may have helped to formulate his hermeneutic. It is my thesis that a Jewish threat in Sardis was at least partly responsible for the kind of hermeneutic employed in Melito's *Paschal Homily*. This discussion will begin with an introductory section on Melito and his homily, to be followed by a look at his use of scripture, his hermeneutic, and finally his context.

#### *Melito and the Paschal Homily — Melito the Bishop*

Given the general ignorance concerning Melito's life, a summary of what is known about him seems appropriate. Melito was bishop in Sardis in Asia Minor during the late second century. Eusebios notes that, along with Polycarp of Smyrna, he was considered one of the "great luminaries" of the church in Asia Minor.<sup>5</sup> Polycrates' letter of c. 195 to Victor of Rome names him among the holy men buried in Sardis. He is called "Melito the eunuch (i.e. unmarried)" and is said to have "lived entirely in the Holy Spirit."<sup>6</sup>

He is known to have written an apology to the emperor Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161-180) in which he argued that the empire should support the Church because they had prospered

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<sup>3</sup>See Othmar Perler, *Meliton de Sardes, Sur la Paque et Fragments*. Sources Chretiennes, no. 123 (Paris, 1966); Stuart George Hall, ed. *Melito of Sardis: On Pascha and Fragments* (Oxford, 1979).

<sup>4</sup>In *Studies Presented to George M. A. Hanfmann*, ed. D. G. Mitten, J. G. Pedley, and J. A. Scott (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 77-85.

<sup>5</sup>H.E. 5.24.2-4.

<sup>6</sup>H.E. 5.24.5.

together.<sup>7</sup> Further, Eusebios reports that he made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in order to draw up a list of the books in the Old Testament canon. From this list he made an extract called the *Eklogai*, which is a six-volume anthology of scripture selections.<sup>8</sup>

Melito was among those bishops in Asia Minor who supported the Quartodeciman observance of Easter. Against Victor of Rome, they argued for its celebration on 14 Nisan, the day of the Jewish Passover.<sup>9</sup> Theologically, Melito's reviews are mixed. Eusebios<sup>10</sup> quotes a writing called *The Little Labyrinth*, in which Melito, along with Irenaios, is described as an Orthodox champion who proclaimed that "Christ is God and man." But he is also thought to have been responsible for a sect which believed that the body, rather than the soul was created in God's image. Origen and Grenadios of Massilia attest that Melito did indeed take such a view. It is this heterodoxy which may have led the Church to suppress Melito's writings and thus the honor which might have been accorded him.<sup>11</sup>

The bishop of Sardis is also known as an orator of considerable distinction. Jerome quotes Tertullian on the quality of Melito's oratory — *elegans et declamatorium ingenium* ("elegant and ingenuous speech").<sup>12</sup> He was also considered a prophet in an area where, by Melito's time, Montanism had erupted. By his eloquence and rhetoric, he seems to have made a profound impression on Asia Minor.<sup>13</sup> The great example, indeed the only example, of his rhetoric is the *Paschal Homily*, a writing which shows that Melito, rather than Hippolytos (as was once believed), was the first Christian preacher known to have used "an elegant and profuse application of rhetorical devices."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>7</sup> H.E. 4.26.7.

<sup>8</sup> Kraabel, "Melito," p. 80. Cf. also Eusebios, H.E. 4.27.12-14.

<sup>9</sup> H.E. 5.23-24.

<sup>10</sup> H.E. 5.8.

<sup>11</sup> White, "Melito," p. 84.

<sup>12</sup> Campbell Bonner, *The Homily on the Passion by Melito, Bishop of Sardis. Studies and Documents, XII* (Philadelphia, 1940), Introduction, p. 4. Cf. Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus* 24.

<sup>13</sup> Sherman E. Johnson, "Christianity in Sardis," *Early Christian Origins*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago, 1961), p. 85.

<sup>14</sup> White, "Melito," p. 90. For a further treatment of Melito's use of Greek rhetoric, see A. Wifstrand, "The Homily of Melito on the Passion," *Vigilae Christiannae*, 2 (1968) 201-23.

Thus, to a discussion of the *Paschal Homily* itself we must now turn.

### *The Paschal Homily*

Early Christian worship provided the immediate setting for the homily. Services of Melito's time were still colored by a certain degree of Jewishness, with the Old Testament being studied and discussed in light of the new age and the teaching of Jesus.<sup>15</sup> A prominent feature of this Jewishness is to be noted in the Church's adoption of the Jewish Passover. The primitive Church seems to have celebrated a Christian Passover feast and, in this respect, separated itself slowly from Judaism.<sup>16</sup> Probably as early as the time of the Johannine community, there was a continuation of the Jewish Passover. It is likely that the Quartodeciman practice of the Asia Minor churches is connected to the Johannine identification of Christ with the paschal lamb. In addition, John's chronology of the Passion corresponds with the sacrifice of paschal lambs on 14 Nisan.<sup>17</sup> As F. L. Cross suggests, the Christian Easter was a firmly established continuation of the Jewish Passover rite by the end of the first century. That the Easter celebration bore the name "Pascha" is a sufficient indication of this.<sup>18</sup>

It is in this setting that Melito's *Paschal Homily* is to be understood. The work is a typological exposition of a traditional Passover text, Exodus 12, and sees Christ as the true paschal lamb. The *Paschal Homily* serves as a celebration of a Christian Feast of Deliverance, echoing Israel's gratitude to Yahweh for her deliverance from Egypt, as seen in Exodus 12. For the Christians, the deliverance from Egypt is a type of the redemption procured by Christ.<sup>19</sup>

One could quibble, as have various scholars, over the precise *Sitz im Leben* of the homily. While it has usually been considered a sort

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<sup>15</sup>J. A. Lamb, "The Place of the Bible in the Liturgy," *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, ed. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans (Cambridge, 1970), 1, p. 565.

<sup>16</sup>Bertil Baertner cites strong evidence for the existence of a Christian Passover Feast held in conjunction with the Jewish calendar in his study, *John 6 and the Jewish Passover* (Copenhagen, 1959).

<sup>17</sup>F. L. Cross, *The Early Christian Fathers* (London, 1960), p. 101. On the Johannine roots of the Christian Paschal celebration, see also Gaertner and E. J. Kilmartin, "Liturgical Influence on John 6," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 22 (1960) 183-91.

<sup>18</sup>Cross, *Early Christian Fathers*, p. 107.

<sup>19</sup>Kilmartin, "Liturgical Influence," pp. 184-85.

of "Good Friday" sermon, other scholars have demurred, suggesting that it is rather a Christian Passover Haggadah. Cross notes that "Good Friday" is an anachronistic designation, given Melito's early date, at which time there was but a single feast of the Pascha. Further, he suggests that stylistic and form-critical analysis of the work reveal more affinities with a Passover Haggadah than with a homily.<sup>20</sup>

Taking exception with Cross is S. G. Hall, who splits the homily into two parts. Paragraphs 1-45 are viewed as an exposition of Exodus 12.1-20, while paragraphs 46-105 are a Passover Haggadah.<sup>21</sup> As a whole the homily's structure does not reflect that of a Passover Haggadah, but Hall does suggest parallel material and structure between the traditional Haggadah and section 46-105.<sup>22</sup> His strongest evidence, however, is the division he notes after paragraph 45. Section 46 supposedly turns to a new subject of "what constitutes the mystery" of the Pascha from a statement of the type and what corresponds to it. Further, he notes that the Georgian translations of the homily, which were published in these two sections at different times, and by different editors, indicate that 1-45 and 46-105 circulated independently of each other. This is perhaps corroborated by Eusebios' reference to *two* treatises by Melito on the Pascha.<sup>23</sup>

While Hall's argument is quite impressive, the strongest evidence against his view is that while there does seem to be a break in thought at the end of 45, the fulfillment of the mystery is not elucidated until paragraphs 46-71. Throughout section 1-45, Melito has, after his introduction (paragraphs 1-10), only paraphrased his Exodus text (paragraphs 11-31) and explained his hermeneutical principles (paragraphs 31-45). Only later does Melito trace out the typological fulfillment of

<sup>20</sup>Cross, *Early Christian Fathers*, pp. 104-05.

<sup>21</sup>Stuart G. Hall, "Melito in the Light of the Passover Haggadah," *Journal of Theological Studies*, New Series, 22 (1971) 29-46.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. pp. 38-40. Unlike the homily as a whole, 46-105 has a disgrace-glory structure which seems to reflect the structure of the Jewish Passover Haggadah. Its treatment of the creation and the fall, and its reculant death and degradation, the preparation for Christ, his coming, rejection, death, and exaltation is seen as paralleling the emphases of Deuteronomy 26.5-9, which makes up part of the Haggadah.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. pp. 41-45. Hall cites the 1911 edition of paragraphs 1-45 by J. N. Birdsall and the later discovery of 46-105 under the pseudonym of Saint John Chrysostom by Michel van Esbrock.

the Passover in Christ. A thorough overview of the homily reveals a logical progression which requires one to see it as a unity.

As for the question of a Passover Haggadah, if a conflation of the argument be allowed, this writer opts for the traditional approach and sees the work as a homily, probably patterned after the Haggadah, for use in the celebration of the Pascha in Sardis. One need not call it a "Good Friday" sermon<sup>24</sup> for with the Quartodeciman celebration there was no distinction between Good Friday and Easter, as their Easter festival was primarily a commemoration of Christ's death, rather than his resurrection.<sup>25</sup> Further, in a Christian setting, the aim of Jewish Haggadic material can be met by the use of a homily. This aim is the development of inner piety and religious devotion, pursued in a scriptural interpretation of nonlegal or narrative character. Indeed, the definition of Haggadah may include the form of homily as one of its methods.<sup>26</sup> Thus, one can safely consider this work as a homily based on a Passover Haggadah, and used in the Christian paschal celebration of Melito's day.

### *Melito's Use of Scripture*

This section will seek mainly to note the scripture passages employed in the *Paschal Homily* and to describe the various ways Melito uses these texts. As to canon, a list of the Old Testament books he accepted is to be found in Eusebios, 4.26.12-14. On his pilgrimage to Jerusalem he learned which books were accepted by the Jews of Palestine. His list closely resembles that list suggested at the Synod of Jamnia. Melito does not quote directly from any New Testament books, but he does refer to his list as the books of the "Old Covenant." This may or may not imply his knowledge of a new covenant (or Testament). It may also be true that Melito's homily contains allusions to certain New Testament writings. His use of scripture involves three modes: literal, prophetic, and typological. His typological exegesis is of most importance to this study and will be treated within our discussion of his hermeneutic. In this section, his literal and prophetic use of scripture will be dealt with in turn.

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<sup>24</sup>Bonner, *Homily*, p. 20.

<sup>25</sup>Jules Lebreton and Jacques Zeiler, *The History of the Primitive Church* (New York, 1949), 2, p. 720.

<sup>26</sup>Isidore Epstein, "Haggadah," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, E-J, ed. George A. Buttrick (Nashville, 1962), p. 509.

*Literal Use of Scripture*

Amid his basically typological understanding of the Old Testament, Melito does use scripture texts which are interpreted literally. Here one can find direct reference to Old Testament passages, indirect allusions to Old Testament passages, and possible echoes from New Testament writings. His references are straightforward quotations or paraphrases of Old Testament passages. In 12-29, Melito paraphrases his basic text of Exodus 12.1-20. Quotations in this section are jumbled, with parts of catchphrases attached to other catchphrases. For example, *PH* (*Paschal Homily*) 12 reads, "You will take a lamb without flaw or blemish."<sup>27</sup> This is a conflation of Exodus 12.3 ("take a lamb") and Exodus 12.5 ("unblemished"). Other literal references include Genesis 2.16-17 in *PH* 47, and Jeremiah 5.8 in *PH* 53. Here these texts are cited to describe man's disobedience to the Edenic command and one of its results, adultery, "every man with his neighbor's wife."

Melito also makes allusions to two Old Testament passages having to do with God's former grace toward Israel. *PH* 81 calls to mind Genesis 35.10 in its reference to God's naming of the Hebrews, i.e. Israel. Later in the same section (*PH* 84-85), Melito reminds the Jews of the many graces God had given her throughout the Exodus, the Wilderness, and Conquest experiences. This, of course, recalls the whole of the Exodus narrative.

The *Paschal Homily* also contains some possible echoes of New Testament writings. This is admittedly impossible to determine for certain, as this phenomenon may be attributed to common oral traditions without positing that Melito knew these New Testament writings. Indeed, if he did, why did he not quote them as he did his Old Testament texts? Nevertheless, some echoes of various New Testament books do find their way into the homily.

As one might expect, given the possible Passover connections between the Johannine community and the churches in Asia Minor, there are in the homily numerous echoes of the Johannine writings. The unbroken bones of the crucified Jesus in *PH* 70-71 parallel

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<sup>27</sup>Text used is an English translation by Thomas Halton in A. Hamman's *The Paschal Mystery* (Staten Island, NY., 1969). Although it is nowhere noted in the book, Hamman's text seems to be that of Michel-Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer XII Meliton de Sardes: Homilie sur la Paque* (Cologne-Geneva, 1960).

John 19.34-36. The raising of Lazaros is alluded to in *PH* 95.<sup>28</sup> Various "I am's" of the Fourth Gospel are reflected in *PH* 103.

Matthew's Gospel is also reflected in various sections of the homily. Matthew 13's parable of the soils may be reflected in *PH* 48. The levying of tribute money of Matthew 17.24 is paralleled in *PH* 86. Matthew 27's references to the washing of Pilate's hands and the gall and wine given to Jesus are echoed in *PH* 92 and 79, respectively.<sup>29</sup>

### *Prophetic Use of Scripture*

The term "prophetic use of scripture" is employed to describe the use of the Old Testament passages which Melito believed to be a direct proclamation by the prophets of the suffering Christ. In his section on the fulfilment of the mystery (*PH* 46-71), Melito has shown that man's fall has resulted in his bondage. He begins in *PH* 57-65 to expound how Christ's sufferings have been preordained. There, he notes various types of Christ's sufferings, and then cites four specific prophetic passages, saying, "By the voice of the prophets, the mystery of the Lord has also been proclaimed" (*PH* 61). In these passages, the immediate historical situation of the prophet is ignored and the prophet himself is viewed as a foreteller, focusing on the future sufferings of the Lord. R. P. C. Hanson views these passages as probably traditional prooftexts.<sup>30</sup>

Moses is cited as directly prophesying concerning Christ in *PH* 61, which quotes Deuteronomy 28.66, "And you shall see your life hanging before your eyes day and night . . ." This reference to hanging may be seen as a direct reference to the crucifixion. By citing Psalm 2.1-2, David is also made a prophet, foretelling that "The kings of the earth and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed" (*PH* 62). In *PH* 63 and 64, Jeremiah 11.19 and Isaiah 53.7 are both quoted, speaking of a gentle (Jeremiah) and a silent (Isaiah) lamb led to the slaughter.

### *Melito's Typological Hermeneutic*

In treating Melito's hermeneutic several problems arise which require clarification before we may turn to the homily itself. One of these questions is raised by Kraabel's suggestion that Melito's use

<sup>28</sup>Bonner, *Homily*, p. 40.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. pp. 39-40.

<sup>30</sup>R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event* (Richmond, VA., 1959), p. 109, n. 1.

of allegory follows a Stoic model. The other issue, to be discussed later, involves whether or not Melito uses allegory. Kraabel's idea is suggested by Robert M. Grant who believes Melito to have been "the first Christian writer in whom we find Stoic exegetical theology newly baptized for Christian use."<sup>31</sup> This does not seem likely, given the characteristics of Stoic allegory. Stoic allegory was necessitated in Greek culture when the old religious ideas began to become abhorrent to more modern philosophical minds. At the same time there remained a reverence for the ancient sacred texts of Homer and Hesiod. These developments created the need for a bridge between the older religious and the philosophical mind. The method used for this task was the allegorical interpretation of Homer and Hesiod. Zeno and his followers sought to discover natural principles and moral ideas which were represented in the popular gods.<sup>32</sup> At these points Melito seems safe from the charge of borrowing Stoic allegory. A large part of his task in the homily was to show that the older religious outlook (the Old Covenant) was of no further value. Unlike the Stoic philosophers Heraklitos and Kornutos, Melito does not seek to defend either the piety or the knowledge of the ancients.<sup>33</sup> Further, he is utterly uninterested in philosophical, metaphysical, or even ethical speculation.

Melito seeks mainly to show how the Christ event was prefigured in the events of the Old Testament, and while the Stoic effort to find its own philosophy in the ancient texts seems similar to Melito's efforts, the homily's emphasis on the future prefigured in the past is unmatched in Stoic allegory. And while Melito's faulty etymology of the word "Pascha" seems to reflect a common Stoic device, a much greater difference between the two is seen in that, unlike Melito who begins with the literal meaning, Stoic allegory had an "indifference to the actual meaning of the writer and a habit of reading by the light of the reader's own fancies. . . ."<sup>34</sup>

These considerations suggest that Stoic allegory was not the model used in the *Paschal Homily*. A key in determining that model is

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<sup>31</sup>R. M. Grant, "Melito of Sardis on Baptism," *Vigilae Christiannae* 4 (1950) 36.

<sup>32</sup>Eduard Zeller, *The Stoic, Epicureans, and Sceptics* (London, 1870), pp. 335-36; cf. also Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages Upon the Christian Church* (London, 1892), pp. 58-61.

<sup>33</sup>Hanson, *Allegory*, pp. 56-58.

<sup>34</sup>Hatch, *Influence*, pp. 55-57.



suggested by H. A. Wolfson's description of the kinds of types used in Rabbinic literature. These types are seen as "attempt[s] to find in scriptural texts predictions of future events already known to the interpreter to have taken place in biblical or post-biblical times."<sup>35</sup> This is precisely what is done in Melito's homily, and it can be traced not to Hellenistic or Stoic allegory, but to what Hanson calls Jewish allegory.<sup>36</sup> He specifically locates this tendency in Rabbinic and particularly Qumran exegesis, both of which saw situations in the scripture as fulfilled in present or immediately past events. Especially was this true as both these modes of interpretation were influenced by a Messianic expectation.<sup>37</sup>

All of this typologizing in no way questions the historical nature of the recorded event or the literal meaning of the text (i.e. that the event happened as literally recorded), and seems to describe what Melito is doing in the *Paschal Homily*. If this be so, the model for his hermeneutic has perhaps been discovered in Palestinian exegesis.

In addressing the first issue, we have perhaps also solved the second problem of whether Melito indeed uses allegory at all. Of course the issue of definition inevitably arises with such a discussion. While Hanson's definitions of allegory and typology have elsewhere been found too restrictive, they may safely be utilized as a measuring rod for what Melito does in the homily.<sup>38</sup> One has suggested that Hanson sees as typological only those interpretations which relate real historical events or persons to other real historical events or persons.<sup>39</sup> If Melito's homily meets this very limited definition of typology, it can also meet other more general definitions, such as that set forth by Danielou in his book, *From Shadows to Reality*. Melito does indeed meet Hanson's definition, particularly insofar as it highlights a "similar situation" between the passion of Christ and the

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<sup>35</sup>H. A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers. Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge, 1970), 1, p. 27.

<sup>36</sup>Hanson, *Allegory*, pp. 11-36.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid. p. 125.

<sup>38</sup>Fred A. Grissom, "A Critique of Hanson's and Danielou's Use of the Terms 'Typology' and 'Allegory' in their Descriptions of Origen's Exegesis," (unpublished seminar paper, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1975), pp. 6-7.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

Passover of Exodus 12.<sup>40</sup> The "similar situation" is that just as the Hebrews were in bondage and were liberated by the sacrifices of the paschal lambs, believers in Jesus were redeemed from spiritual bondage by the sacrifice of the True Paschal Lamb. Thus, rather than being patterned after Stoic allegory, the *Paschal Homily* uses a typology which originates within Jewish interpretation.

The exegetical principles underlying Melito's typological hermeneutic are most clearly set forth in two sections of the *Paschal Homily*: PH 35-45 and 57-58. The cornerstone of Melito's hermeneutic is PH 35:

Words and deeds, dearly beloved, are meaningless if they are separated from their symbol and prefigure. Everything said and everything done participates in this prefiguring — words in their parable, and deed in their prefiguration; and so, just as deeds are indicated by their prototype, so words are illuminated by parable.

Here Melito suggests that all truly important events or words have prefigurations in the past. Present deeds have prototypical deeds in the past; words (i.e. speech events) have symbols in the past. This idea is carried on in PH 57, which says that "a coming event derives credence from its distant prefiguration." The implication is that a prefiguration in the past is indispensable for a present event which has been deemed important — an important event of the present must have been prefigured in the past. Thus, this principle legitimizes Melito's search for a prefiguration of the Passion.

From this point of departure, Melito in PH 36-38 sets forth an analogy of the sculptor's model. A sculptor uses a model in which the future work of art is outlined. The loftier future work emerges out of the perishable model. But when the sculpture itself emerges, the model has outlived its usefulness.<sup>41</sup> "Everything has its proper

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<sup>40</sup>Hanson, *Allegory*, p. 7. It is perhaps a further weakness of Hanson's definitions that while he sharply distinguishes between allegory and typology, he acknowledges that typology is utilized as a form of Jewish allegory.

<sup>41</sup>Bonner, *Homily*, p. 108, notes that this figure of the sculptor's model is also utilized by Origen in his *Homily on Leviticus 10:1*. Origen's use makes a similar application to Judaism's outworn institutions, and indicated part of Melito's influence.

time: the model has its time, the object has its season" (*PH* 38). Further, the model is precious before the reality, but afterward, it is found wanting. Thus, in *PH* 39-45, Melito applies this analogy: The people of Israel and the Law served as models for the present reality. Israel pointed toward the salvation and truth of the Lord, and was the outline of the Church. The Law proclaimed the Gospel's teachings and has been fulfilled in the Church (*PH* 39-40). But like the sculptor's model, the figures of Israel and the Law are useless in comparison with the coming of the Gospel. "The Law was terminated when the Gospel came to light, and the people (of Israel) lost its identity when the Church took its place. And the figure was abolished when the Lord became manifest" (*PH* 43). Melito concludes this section with a peroration which announces that all things Jewish have been, in the light of the Gospel, overshadowed and rendered valueless.

Melito is ambivalent toward Judaism. From his lengthy section, "The crime of Israel," he may be considered a rabid anti-Semite.<sup>42</sup> But at the same time, as a Quarto-deciman, he finds himself clinging to at least part of Judaism. His hermeneutic allows him to straddle this fence: The typological emphasis helps him keep part of his Jewishness, while his analogy of the sculptor's model enables him to relativize severely the claims of Judaism. We will now turn to his situation in Sardis in order to attempt to determine how his context helped formulate his hermeneutic.

### *Contextual Influences of Melito's Hermeneutic*

Christianity probably arrived in Sardis through the ministry of Jewish-Christian teachers. Paul may have visited Sardis, as he did establish churches in other cities of Asia Minor. By the beginning of the second century, there were many Christians in the area.<sup>43</sup> The letter to the church at Sardis in Revelation 3.1 gives us all the information about the church available until the time of Melito. The ambivalence of Melito toward the Jews seems to have been common to the area, for the author of Revelation has a very Jewish type of Christianity, despite calling orthodox Judaism a "synagogue of Satan"

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<sup>42</sup>Cf. Eric Werner, "Melito of Sardis: First Poet of Deicide," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 37 (1966) 191-210.

<sup>43</sup>Robert L. Wilken, "Melito, the Jewish Community at Sardis, and the Sacrifice of Isaac," *Theological Studies* 37 (1976) 55-57.

(Revelation 3.9)."<sup>44</sup> Part of this is perhaps due to the fact that many of the Christians there were converts from Judaism.

A more likely explanation is likely to be found, however, in the size and power of the Jewish community in Sardis. In 1962 George M. A. Hanfmann led a Harvard and Cornell Universities expedition to Sardis. The excavation uncovered the largest and richest synagogue ever discovered anywhere in the ancient world. Obviously, it must have been a very powerful Jewish community which owned such a synagogue. Inscriptions in the synagogue reveal that some members were city councillors, jewelers, or goldsmiths.<sup>45</sup> The impression is that here is a powerful, prestigious Jewish community which was rich and influential enough to own this magnificent structure. Kraabel rightly suggests that perhaps certain families had accumulated power and status and were responding negatively to what they saw as a Christian threat.<sup>46</sup>

Kraabel suggests that Melito's *Apology* to Marcus Aurelius may have created conflict with the city's Jewish population. The *Apology* is known to have advocated imperial support of Christianity. As this would have negatively affected the Jews' privileged position with the State, this Jewish-Christian conflict was a likely result. While this is a plausible hypothesis, it contains some problems. First, there is no certainty that Melito's *Apology* was written before the *Paschal Homily*. But further, Eusebios' quotation from the *Apology* indicates that a persecution was already going on at the time the *Apology* was written. Melito states that this persecution was being instigated by certain "shameless informers and lovers of other men's goods taking advantage of the ordinances"<sup>47</sup> If these "lovers of other men's goods" were powerful Jews who were using their influence with the State against the Christians, one can more adequately explain the degree of animosity toward the Jews exhibited in the homily. Indeed, this hostility is seen in that the largest section of the *Paschal Homily* (PH 72-100) recounts Israel's ignorance, her crime against Jesus, and her eternal punishment. The Jews are called "Criminal Israel" and

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<sup>44</sup>Sherman E. Johnson, "Christianity in Sardis," *Early Christian Origins*, ed. Allen Wikgren (Chicago, 1961), p. 83.

<sup>45</sup>D. G. Mitten, "A New Look at Ancient Sardis," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 29 (1966) 64-65.

<sup>46</sup>Kraabel, "Melito," p. 84.

<sup>47</sup>H.E. 4.26.5.

"Ungrateful Israel." She is vilified for feasting while Christ was tormented; she is accused of an "unprecedented murder in the midst of Jerusalem." Finally, because Israel "destroyed the Lord," she lies as a corpse "prostrate" and "pulverized." Thus, the persecution mentioned in Melito's *Apology*, along with a possible Judaizing tendency in Asia Minor around A.D. 170,<sup>48</sup> is the likely explanation for the severity of Melito's anti-Jewish attack in the *Paschal Homily*.

It is this anti-Jewish sentiment which best explains Melito's strong emphasis on the termination of Israel as the People of God. It may have also provided him a pretext for developing his sculptor's model analogy as a hermeneutical principle for writing Israel out of salvation history. In addition, the competition with Judaism in Sardis, particularly if there *was* a Judaizing tendency at the time, would have been a strong impetus for a bishop's speaking to his people's needs by developing an elaborate Christian typology from the Old Testament. As Robert Wilken suggests, for a new religion without legitimizing marks in the Graeco-Roman world, it was essential for the Christians to show their own continuity with Jewish writings by interpreting the Jewish Bible in accordance with Christian beliefs.<sup>49</sup> Assuming that the annual paschal celebration might have rolled around while these were still live issues, the stage would have been perfectly set for Melito the bishop to write a sermon intending to achieve all these purposes.

### *Conclusion: A Summary*

In this paper, my purpose has been to show how contextual influences helped formulate the hermeneutic of Melito's *Paschal Homily*. One cannot be very sanguine that he has hypothesized correctly when dealing with a personage about whom so little is known. Nevertheless, we have reached the following conclusions: This study has approached this homily as an early example of Christian preaching, patterned after a Jewish Passover Haggadah. In searching out the provenance of Melito's hermeneutic, three streams have converged to create an impression of his context. First, Melito's church was experiencing some type of persecution which he believed to have been instigated by the powerful Jewish community in Sardis. This engendered within him a considerable degree of enmity toward the Jews, a great deal of

<sup>48</sup>Lebreton and Zeiller, *History*, p. 721 and Johnson, *Christianity*, p. 85.

<sup>49</sup>Wilken, *Melito*, p. 68.

which surfaces through the homily. It also gave him reason to develop his sculptor's model analogy, which makes up a formidable part of his hermeneutic. Secondly, competition with the synagogue and a Judaizing tendency in the area led him to develop his elaborate typology in an attempt to explain how Christianity is contained in and goes beyond the Old Testament. Finally, his Quartodeciman beliefs led him to focus on the Passover traditions as the most appropriate place to develop his typology. This was perhaps eventuated when his calendar called upon him to prepare a paschal, i.e. Easter, sermon. Hence, the *Paschal Homily* is the result of three strong influences from Melito's context in Sardis. This is not to ignore the fact that the rich fund of Christian tradition may have held the precedent for all three elements of the bishop's thought — anti-Semitism, typological interpretation in general, and paschal interpretation in particular. But it is to say that it is also likely that Melito's situation in life was at least partly responsible for his hermeneutic.

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*New Martyrs of the Turkish Yoke.* Transl. Leonidas J. Papadopoulos, Georgia Lizardos, *et al.* Seattle: St. Nectarios Press 1985. Illustrated. Pp. 389. Paper.

This new book, handsomely printed and bound, is a tremendous gift to non-Greek-reading Orthodox Christians in the West. For four hundred years the Greek Orthodox Church suffered under the tyrannical rule of the Ottoman Empire, beset by trials and tribulations which the West is only now beginning to understand fully with the advent of Islamic political power in the contemporary world. Though other Orthodox Churches suffered under the Turkish yoke, even non-Greek Orthodox Christians are unfamiliar with the devastation that the Ottoman Empire meant for the Orthodox Church of Greece, for Greek culture, and for the Byzantine ethos. A tragedy of unspeakable proportions, the domination of Orthodox Greece by Islam is something which all of us should carefully study and understand. The present book engenders such understanding.

As a student of history, it has long annoyed me that Western historians, not to mention Greek scholars who fear to admit what a toll the Turkish yoke took on the Greek people, often present the barbaric occupation of Greece by the Turks as something benevolent, emphasizing the tolerance of the Ottoman rulers. In fact, the Ottoman rulers were capricious, deadly, brutal, violent, and all too seldom civilized, as evidenced by the multitude of Greeks who gave their blood for their faith in the face of Islamic intolerance — some ninety of whom are depicted in this superb volume. Their blood casts the same doubt that recent, competent historical scholarship does on the notion that the Turkish yoke was light for the Greek people. (And in all of this let no one think that I am reticent to acknowledge those Ottoman rulers who were, in fact, benevolent and civilized. I simply wish to see such instances placed in perspective. They represent the best of what might have been, but very seldom was.)

In his moving introduction to the *New Martyrs of the Turkish Yoke*, the Rev. Anthony B. Cavalas echoes the folk myth among Greek people that the Orthodox faith flourished under the Ottoman rulers. This, too, like the myth of a benevolent rule over the subjugated Greeks, does not represent the facts. When Saint Kosmas Aitolos, the great eighteenth century spiritual Father and missionary, went out among his fellow Greeks, he found them appallingly ignorant of their own faith. The Turkish rule had, in fact, hit at the very core of Greek



society and the Orthodox Church. That he enlightened these people who were forced into darkness is one of his great fears. That the martyrs presented in this book confessed their faith so boldly in such circumstances is indeed a witness to the strength of the Faith even under the worst conditions. These martyrs, rather than representing a vibrant faith among the people, gave their blood to preserve that faith by *renewing* what the dark forces of a barbarian empire had so assiduously tried to diminish and extinguish.

There are no more than just a few problems in syntax in these translations. The main translators, Mr. Papadopoulos and Ms. Lizardos, have over the years, quietly and without fanfare, produced some excellent and vibrant translations of hagiographic texts. Their expertise shows everywhere in the book, especially in the use of pious, reverent words, rather than the noisy "interpretations" that now too often pass as "translations" of the lives of the Saints.

I am, finally, pleased that a good, solid text of the lives of the Greek martyrs under Turkish rule exists in English, since a great deal of apocryphal nonsense, usually in the form of folk stories and imaginative fables, passes around in the Church here in the West, really clouding the image of the Turkish yoke that one might form from a reading of these lives alone.

This reading is mandatory for all Orthodox believers, certainly enlightening for Orthodox in the West and for non-Greek Orthodox, and fascinating, I am sure, for the Western Christian reader. I only hope that it might be supplemented very soon with a book about some other Greek martyrs who deserve to be made known to an English-reading audience: the martyrs of the Greek "civil war" (victims of the Greek Communist insurrection). These martyrs were brutally slaughtered by a more modern invader, in the form of an anti-Orthodox ideology, and their story needs to be told. Mr. Papadopoulos and Ms. Lizardos are very much capable of undertaking such a task. I hope that they will do so.

Bishop Chrysostomos  
*Etna, California*

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## Novella 89 of Leo the Wise on Marriage: An Insight into its Theoretical and Practical Impact

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PETER L'HUILLIER

NOVELLA 89 ISSUED BY EMPEROR LEO VI THE WISE (886-912) states that henceforth priestly blessing is the only way for entering legally into marriage.<sup>1</sup> Considered from the viewpoint of written legal history, this statement constitutes a landmark within the framework of a protracted evolution. From this time onwards, both canon law and civil legislation take for granted the validity of this stipulation.

Novella 89 provides a good example of a phenomenon affecting the whole system of Roman law in the Byzantine East. Step by step, customs are embedded in written law. So, novella 89 gives legal sanction to an already widespread practice. By that time, however, some foundational principles underlying the classical jurisprudence on marriage were no longer understood. Thus, with respect to marital bond formation, Leo VI considers the lack of mandatory formalities in the past as a mark of carelessness.<sup>2</sup>

For various reasons, the ancient Church did not try to elaborate a specific doctrine about marital bond formation. Dealing with this topic would lie beyond the scope of the present paper. Suffice it to say that this attitude has theoretical and practical causes. Church

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<sup>1</sup>P. Noailles-A. Dain, *Les Nouvelles de Léon VI le sage* (Paris, 1944), pp. 294-97.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 295.

authorities did not question the fact that marriage was concluded in accordance with civil laws and local customs (*Volksrechte*). Needless to say that pagan rites sometimes associated with weddings were not tolerated by the Church. However, some customs initially perceived as objectionable were later reinterpreted in a Christian perspective. This happens, for example, with the use of crowns.<sup>3</sup>

The establishment of Orthodox Christianity as the religion of the Empire did not bring about alterations in state legislation with respect to marital bond formation. On this issue, the "Corpus Juris Civilis" of Emperor Justinian reflects with minor adjustments the views of classical Roman jurisprudence. It is noteworthy that during Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages Christian ideas on marriage did not easily creep into the field of substantive law.

Classical Roman law conceives marriage as a fact sustained by the will of the parties to be married to one another ("maritalis affectio"). The parties, of course, must comply with specific requirements in order to be legally capable of being married. The "matrimonium iustum" presupposes that the partners have the "jus conubii." This right belonged exclusively to Roman citizens. The "Constitutio Antoniniana" issued ca. A.D. 212 bestowed Roman citizenship upon the bulk of the free inhabitants of the Empire.<sup>4</sup> In the perspective of Roman law, social ceremonies and the "Deductio uxoris in domum mariti" do not produce legal effects. At best, they provide a presumptive evidence about the intention of the partner(s).

In the East, the ideas on marital bond formation, conveyed by Roman law, had a limited impact. According to the views which were widely spread among the Easterners, marriage comes into being by subsequent steps.<sup>5</sup> Each of them are necessarily accompanied by rites of passage. In this process, the consent of the partners does not come into prominence. Settled in a Christian context, this conception tended to give a new significance to sacred blessing: a legitimate marriage does imply a religious solemnization. Nevertheless, it took

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<sup>3</sup>Saint John Chrysostom, in Epist. I ad Tim. Hom. 9, 2, PG 62.64B.

<sup>4</sup>About that constitution, Bernard S. Jackson states: "One effect was that the personal law of those who fell within its terms became Roman law, instead of their native local law," *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition* (Philadelphia, 1981), 2, p. 165.

<sup>5</sup>Barry Nicholas, *An Introduction to Roman Law* (Oxford, 1969), pp. 80-90.

a long time for this viewpoint to obtain official recognition. On the other hand, and for good reasons, church authorities were reluctant to endorse without qualification the aforementioned popular theory. The Church considered marriage as an institution relevant to natural law and falling under the category of the realities of "this world."<sup>6</sup> This, of course, does not mean that the Church regarded marriage of the faithful with indifference. Church concerns used to bear mainly on ethical issues. Furthermore, some kinds of unions were considered as objectionable. Infringing church law entailed "*epitimia*" — the severity of which were in direct ratio to the deviation from ecclesiastical standards.<sup>7</sup>

Up to the second half of the fourth century, the presence of bishops or priests at wedding festivities used to be an exceptional favor. From that time onward, in some places, involvement of the clergy became customary.<sup>8</sup> To be sure, initially, such an involvement was only conceivable for marriage fully complying with the highest ecclesiastical standard. At all events the blessing bestowed upon the bride and bridegroom was not intended to fulfill a condition of validity. Thus, for a long time, church authorities did not favor the doctrine linking validity with sacred blessing lest it should blur the distinction between two categories of marriage: unions fully approved by the Church and those considered simply as permissible. The Synod in Trullo (691) issued several canons dealing with matrimonial matters. It is noteworthy that there is no allusion to religious solemnization of weddings. This can hardly be regarded as a fortuitous omission.

In the first half of the eighth century, civil law takes a step forward. The *Ecloga*, presumably published in 741, recognizing the validity of marriage concluded "ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ . . . δι' εὐλογίας."<sup>9</sup> However, this is only an alternative for members of the lower class, unable to comply with regular procedure. In spite of its limited purpose, this stipulation ought to be noted because the lawgiver intended to adapt Justinian's law to customs actually observed by the inhabitants of

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<sup>6</sup>Jean Dauvillier, *Les temps apostoliques* (Paris, 1970), pp. 373-81.

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Saint Basil, canons 35 and 75.

<sup>8</sup>Korbinian Ritzer, *Formen, Riten und religiöses Brauchtum der Eheschliessung in den christlichen Kirchen des ersten Jahrtausends* (Münster-Westf., 1962), pp. 76-77.

<sup>9</sup>1, paragraph 8, J. Zepos and P. Zepos, *Jus Graecoromanum* (Athens, 1931), 2, p. 23.

the Empire.<sup>10</sup> Taking account of this fact, one can infer that in the first half of the eighth century, a universal consensus on the necessity of sacred blessing had not yet been reached. However, this idea was gaining ground. Otherwise, one cannot understand why Emperor Constantine VI was so anxious to secure such a blessing for his scandalous remarriage in 795.<sup>11</sup> During the sixties of the ninth century, the Greek missionaries in Bulgaria insisted on sacred blessing as essential for being legitimately married. The Roman Curia sharply criticized this tenet.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly enough, in his encyclical denouncing the errors of the Latin missionaries in Bulgaria, Patriarch Photios does not mention this point. This encyclical was issued in 867. Presumably, the patriarch was unwilling to argue for a doctrine which, at that time, had not been officially endorsed by civil legislation nor canon law.

Lately, scholarly investigation has led to the reconsideration of several issues with regard to legislation published by Emperors Basil I (867-886) and Leo VI (886-912).<sup>13</sup> The *Eisagoge*, up until now mistakenly called *Epanagoge*, was actually published towards the very end of the reign of Basil I, i.e., ca. 885/86. Recent investigation also makes a point clear: the assumption that this work was never officially promulgated does not bear up under critical scrutiny. Especially with respect to matrimonial law, the *Eisagoge* relies on the *Ecloga*. Nonetheless, there is a significant alteration: ecclesiastical wedding becomes now the first option. Albeit cited, marriage by written contract (διδά συμβολαίου) is presumably considered as an alternative for people who cannot get canonically married according to the rites of the Church.<sup>14</sup>

Determining exactly when novella 89 was issued meets insuperable obstacles. Assigning a precise date would imply that we can solve the problem of editorial process. Textual evidence demonstrates that the novellae are closely interrelated.<sup>15</sup> Even if they were first issued

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<sup>10</sup>Hans Julius Wolff, *Roman Law, An Historical Introduction* (Norman, 1951), pp. 181-82.

<sup>11</sup>Ritzer, p. 102, n. 405.

<sup>12</sup>Responsa ad Bulgaros, M. G. H., Ep. 6.2, 568-600.

<sup>13</sup>Sp. N. Troyanos, *Οἱ πηγὲς τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ δικαίου* (Athens-Komotine, 1986), pp. 93-124.

<sup>14</sup>16, paragraph 1, Zepos and Zepos, p. 274.

<sup>15</sup>Noailles-Dain, pp. viii-xiii.

separately, shortly thereafter, they were published as a collection. At all events, they antecede the promulgation of the *Procheiros Nomos*. Thus, the novellae were published before 907.

Taking into account the evolution of Byzantine law, establishing the religious form of marriage as a mandatory rule can hardly be labeled an unexpected innovation. Actually, the lawgiver regards this stipulation as putting an end to an abnormal situation. Thereby, he intends to underscore the distinction between lawful marriage and other types of cohabitation, which are devoid of legal effects.<sup>16</sup>

To what extent does novella 89 affect the consensual theory? One ought to avoid a simplistic answer. On the other hand, Byzantine jurists and canonists repeatedly emphasize the significance of consent and they state that the lack of consent renders a marriage null and void.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand in medieval Byzantine legislation and jurisprudence, consent is regarded more as a prerequisite than the main factor in the process of marital bond formation. For example, this outlook underlies Balsamon's commentaries on canons 26 and 38 of Saint Basil.<sup>18</sup> It is noteworthy that Balsamon does not commit an anachronism. He is aware of the fact that this situation results from the law issued by Emperor Leo VI. At any rate, Byzantine canonists did not perceive a dilemma, viz. consent versus priestly blessing.<sup>19</sup> In fact, during the late Middle Ages, Byzantine jurisprudence on marital bond formation intertwines concepts drawn from Roman law and Eastern views. To be sure, those basic elements have been partly

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 297. Cf. novella 91, pp. 298-301. The wording of this novella suggests that the lawgiver is not conversant with the Roman concept of "Concubinatus." The Nomocanon in 14 Titles states: "A concubine is a woman who cohabits legally (νομίμως) with a man, without being married," 13, 5, Rhalles and Potles. 1, p. 308.

<sup>17</sup>Towards the end of the Byzantine Epoch, Constantine Harmenopoulos reaffirms this principle in his *Πρόχειρος νόμος ἡ Ἐξάβιβλος*, 4, paragraph 3, ed. K. G. Pitsakes (Athens, 1971), 4, p. 227.

<sup>18</sup>Rhalles and Potles, 4, pp. 160 and 183.

<sup>19</sup>Ritzer asserts that Symeon of Thessalonike attributes no constitutive effect to sacred blessing in marital bond formation, p. 111. Ritzer follows the opinion previously expressed by Martin Jugie, *Theologia dogmat. Christ. Orient.* (Paris, 1930), 3, p. 448. Symeon's passage cited by those authors (PG 155.509D) could be interpreted in such a way. However, this interpretation hardly fits in with the general approach of Symeon. Furthermore, nothing in the immediate context of the citation suggests that Symeon intends to deal with such a question.

reinterpreted under the influence of Christian ideas. In this framework, mutual consent is expressed by the betrothal rites. The minimum age for regular betrothal is fourteen for men and twelve for women.<sup>20</sup> Betrothal is considered as part and parcel of marital bond formation. Therefore, it entails canonical and legal consequences.<sup>21</sup> Needless to say that Byzantine jurists and canonists did not elaborate a sophisticated doctrine of "intention" involving psychological factors.

In contrast with the verbosity of the preamble and conclusions of the novella, the rule itself is tersely formulated: "... we order that marriage be confirmed by the evidence of a sacred blessing ("τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ τῆς ἱερᾶς εὐλογίας ἐρρῶσθαι"). Therefore, if those who want to get married do not comply with that procedure, from its inception, this union shall not be considered as marriage and such a cohabitation will not produce legal effects."<sup>22</sup> The actual significance of this statement should be correctly interpreted. Emperor Leo VI did not intend to alter dramatically matrimonial law. The stipulation does not apply to those who, because of their social status, are prevented from being legally married. Novellae 100 and 101 prove clearly this fact.<sup>23</sup> However, establishing the sacred blessing as the sole form of marriage tended to underline the abnormal situation of the faithful who were prevented from being legitimately married only because of their social status. Sooner or later, this issue had to be addressed, though the problem was not solved prior to the end of the eleventh century. In 1095 Emperor Alexios I bestowed upon slaves the right of getting lawfully married. The imperial decree (διάταγμα) is based on theological considerations: for all humankind, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism.<sup>24</sup> It is noteworthy that thereafter official documents issued by the church authority equate marital unions without priestly blessing with fornication (πορνεία).<sup>25</sup>

One cannot infer from novella 89 that thenceforth matrimonial matters fell within the exclusive competency of the Church. Actually,

<sup>20</sup>Novellae 74 and 109 of Emperor Leo VI, pp. 262-65 and 354-57.

<sup>21</sup>Jos Zhishman, *Das Eherecht der orientalischen Kirche* (Vienna, 1864), pp. 137-56.

<sup>22</sup>Noailles-Dain, *Les Nouvelles*, p. 297, my translation.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. pp. 328-35.

<sup>24</sup>Novellae 35 and 35B (A.D. 1095), Zepos and Zepos, 1, pp. 341-44 and 344-46. On theological considerations, p. 343.

<sup>25</sup>See M. Jugie, *Theologia*, p. 456, n. 2.



during the subsequent centuries, both emperors and patriarchs contribute to the elaboration of matrimonial law. However, from the tenth century onward, imperial decisions on marriage either are made by request of church authorities or merely confirm patriarchal and synodal pronouncements.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, since sacred blessing is required for betrothal<sup>27</sup> and marriage, the Church's involvement constitutes a decisive factor.

Undoubtedly, novella 89 provided a legal basis for effectively implementing church regulations on marriage. Balsamon's commentary on canon 38 of Saint Basil exemplifies my assertion. Saint Basil states: "Maidens who without the consent of their father run after men are guilty of fornication. But if the parents can be brought to acquiescence, the matter seems to be susceptible of healing. However, they are not to be immediately restored to communion; they shall be under penance for three years." Balsamon observes that now this canon is no longer relevant since there is no valid marriage without sacred celebration (ἱερολογία). This solemnization takes place when the time of penance has come to an end.<sup>28</sup>

To what extent has novella 89 affected the liturgical practice of the Byzantine Church? One cannot give a definite answer. At any rate, the promulgation of this law does not constitute a watershed. First, one should keep in mind that novella 89 does not deal with technicalities of ecclesiastical ritual. The lawgiver refers only "τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ τῆς ἱερᾶς εὐλογίας." This is even less explicit than the previous statement of the *Eisagoge*, which mentions two alternatives for ecclesiastical marriage, through blessing or crowning ("εἴτε δι' εὐλογίας εἴτε διὰ στεφανώματος").<sup>29</sup> Yet, given the specific purpose of novella 89, this difference has not to be regarded as significant. Neither before the promulgation of the law nor after was crowning considered as a necessary condition for validity. To be sure, in the mind of the public at that time, crowning was closely associated with legitimate marriage. So, in spite of the unbending opposition of the rigorists, the custom tended to spread.<sup>30</sup> In the *Procheiros Nomos*, published

<sup>26</sup>The "Prostagma" issued by Emperor Manuel I in April, 1166 provides a typical example of such procedure, Zepos and Zepos, 1, pp. 408-10.

<sup>27</sup>Novella 74 of Leo VI, pp. 262-65.

<sup>28</sup>Rhalles and Potles, 4, pp. 182-84. See especially p. 183.

<sup>29</sup>"Epanogoge" 16, 1, Zepos and Zepos, 2, p. 274.

<sup>30</sup>Ritzer, pp. 101-03.

shortly after the novella, the lawgiver specifies that crowning is not to be clandestinely performed.<sup>31</sup> This phrasing suggests that the crowning is a regular part of the marriage ceremony. However, crowning never achieved that canonical status. In fact, it is probably an indirect effect of novella 89. Although church authorities did not succeed in their attempt to enforce entirely the standard of canonical strictness, (ἀκρίβεια), at least they were able to eliminate excessive laxity.<sup>32</sup> Church authorities did not object to the stipulation of novella 89. Yet they accepted the law on their own terms. So, this led to the elaboration of rituals utilized for second marriage. In manuscript tradition, such a ritual is first attested in the twenties of the eleventh century. However, it reflects the practice of the Constantinopolitan Church during the tenth century.<sup>33</sup>

The implementation of novella 89 did not encounter obstacles in the Byzantine Empire. This can be inferred from the fact that later on it was not necessary to issue laws reaffirming its validity. In the *Procheiros Nomos* published shortly after the novellae, the stipulation bearing on sacred blessing is not restated. This easy acceptance of the religious form of marriage can be understood in the light of two intertwined factors: (1) by that time, in their overwhelming majority, the inhabitants of the Empire were Orthodox Christians and therefore bound by the rules of canon law; (2) church authorities were potent enough to enforce those rules. This fact is exemplified by the final solution given to the problem of Emperor Leo's tetragamy.

Associating closely wedding with sacred blessing led sometimes to a misrepresentation of church discipline during the first centuries. For example, canon 7 of Neocaesarea states that a priest ought not to be present at the nuptial banquet ("μὴ ἐστιᾶσθαι") of persons contracting a second marriage. When this rule was enacted (ca. 314-319) a religious ceremony for second marriage was not conceivable. Thus, the presence of a priest at the banquet seemed to be illogical. When the Church accepted the sacred blessing for second marriage the rationale of the canon issued by the Synod of Neocaesarea ceased to be perceived. Paraphrasing the text of the canon, Aristenos states

<sup>31</sup>4, 27, Zepos and Zepos, 2, p. 128.

<sup>32</sup>Actually, after the enactment of the "Tome of Union" in 920 (Grumel, *Regestes*, 669), the Church's standpoint on marriage was never again challenged.

<sup>33</sup>Ritzer, p. 138.

that the priest who blesses the marriage of a digamist (“εὐλογήσας τὸν δῖγαμον”) must abstain from being present at the banquet.<sup>34</sup> Niketas of Heraclea sets forth the same interpretation.<sup>35</sup>

Beyond the territorial limits of the Empire, even among Orthodox peoples, the law on ecclesiastical marriage was not so easily implemented. In Russia, according to the testimony of Metropolitan John II of Kiev (1080-1085), only the princes and boyars used to comply with the rule.<sup>36</sup> His attempt to enforce the law did not meet with success. Actually, in that country, the practice of “common law marriage” lasted until the end of the seventeenth century.<sup>37</sup> In Iberia (Georgia) one can infer from an incidental remark of Balsamon that toward the end of the twelfth century, many Orthodox did not observe the law.<sup>38</sup> The “Zakonnik” published by Tsar Stephen Dushan in 1349 strongly emphasizes the necessity of sacred blessing.<sup>39</sup> This suggests that until then, the rule had not been strictly applied in Serbian lands.

With regard to medieval Bulgaria, there is a lack of direct evidence. Nevertheless, one can advance a very plausible hypothesis. In spite of recurrent conflicts with the Empire, strong cultural and religious influences from Byzantium molded the life of that country. Furthermore, from 1018 to 1185, Bulgaria was a part of the Byzantine Empire. During that period, the law on ecclesiastical marriage was undoubtedly enforced and, in all probability, the recovery of independence did not affect this situation.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Rhalles and Potles, 3, p. 82.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 5, p. 441.

<sup>36</sup>Answers, 30, ed. V. N. Beneshevich, *Sbornik pamiatnikov po istorii Tserkovnago Prava* (Petrograd, 1915), pp. 119-20.

<sup>37</sup>A. S. Pavlov, *Kurs Tserkovnago Prava* (Sergieva Lavra, 1902), pp. 368-70.

<sup>38</sup>This can be inferred from an incidental remark formulated by Balsamon in his commentary on canon 72 of the Synod of Trullo, Rhalles and Potles, 2. 2, p. 473.

<sup>39</sup>Zhishman, pp. 154-55.

<sup>40</sup>D. Obolensky states: “Bulgarian medieval sources are notoriously scarce. It is virtually certain, however, that from 1018 to 1185 the lands between the lower Danube, the Adriatic and the Black Sea, annexed to the Empire by Basil II, were administered by East Roman law.” *The Byzantine Commonwealth* (Crestwood, 1982), p. 408. In the archbishopric of Ohrid, Byzantine law remained always normative. With respect to matrimonial matters, see J. Snegarov, *Istoria na Ohridskata Archiepiskopiya* (Sofia, 1924), 1, pp. 306-07.

After the Turkish conquest of the territories which had once been the Eastern half of the Roman Empire, matrimonial matters fell within the exclusive competency of religious authorities.<sup>41</sup> So, as in the past, Orthodox Christians had to comply with the nomocanonical rules for legally entering into marriage.

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<sup>41</sup>“The patriarchal courts had full jurisdiction over all affairs concerning the Orthodox which had a religious connotation, that is, marriage, divorce, the guardianship of minors, and testaments and successions,” Steven Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge, 1968), p. 171.

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The photographs in this book are a treasure in themselves. Every reader will be delighted in them. The book is handsome, durably bound in paper, and carefully printed. My copy, a much appreciated copy from the author himself, is something which I shall cherish. I heartily recommend this book to every Orthodox Christian with a reasonable knowledge of Greek. I look forward to an English edition of the book, which should give English-speaking Orthodox (and others) in the West a charming glance into the Orthodox world of no less a traditionalist than the man who almost single-handedly restored Byzantine iconography to our churches in this century: the blessed and ever-memorable Photios Kontoglou. The great and growing debt that we owe to Professor Cavarinos is substantially increased by his writing of this remarkable book.

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*

*On the Divine Liturgy: Orthodox Homilies, Volume 2.* By Augoustinos N. Kantiotes. Trans. Asterios Gerostergios. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. Pp. 282 + Index.

One expects work of the highest quality from the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, which has supplied Orthodox and non-Orthodox readers with some of the most important little volumes of material in Orthodox studies available in the English language. Likewise, Father Asterios Gerostergios has provided an English-reading audience with a number of superb scholarly books. And from Metropolitan Augoustinos of Florina, an important traditionalist Orthodox thinker and spiritual guide, one would await nothing but wise and trenchant spiritual direction. It is no surprise, then, that this second volume of Father Gerostergios' excellent translation of Metropolitan Augoustinos' beautiful discourses on the Divine Liturgy should live up to the reputation of other materials from the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.

The first volume of these commentaries on the Divine Liturgy, also beautifully printed and bound, contained a few typographical errors which are generally absent from the present volume. Not absent are the same practical, inspiring and readable patristic observations about the Liturgy and the life of the divine Mysteries that

adorned the first volume in this collection. As my comments on the flyleaf of the present volume regarding Volume 1 note, Metropolitan Augoustinos' commentaries capture "the essence of the Church's teaching on the mystical celebration of the life-giving eucharistic service." This observation is amply justified by the excellent materials presented in this second volume.

These essays by the author are so rich that one is hard-pressed to make any specific observations about them. To do so is to take away from a magnificent mosaic of spiritual wisdom and concentrate on one golden element. As precious and as beautiful as that element may be, it does not reach up to the overall spiritual *Gestalt* presented by Metropolitan Augoustinos' work taken *in toto* — and this whole must include a careful reading of both Volume 1 and 2, since the volumes do not stand alone; they are integrated one with the other. Nonetheless, with specific regard to Volume 2, I would draw the reader's attention to a number of unique and compelling observations. Firstly, His Eminence's comments about the existence of God, the limitations of the human intellect in grasping the nature of God, and the universal human search for God are deeply moving and express in simple language something of the Orthodox understanding of the profundity of God (see pp. 124 ff). Father Gerostergios has done a beautiful job in rendering this beautiful Greek exposition in an eloquent English style. Secondly, Metropolitan Augoustinos provides insight into two aspects of liturgical worship that are widely misunderstood by many contemporary Orthodox thinkers: holy Communion itself (esp. pp. 256-66) and the significance of the liturgical period which follows the Communion of the Faithful (esp. pp. 279-82). In few places have I seen such a clear combination of theory and pastoral sensitivity in explicating the nature of our liturgical encounter with Christ.

I was delighted to see an excellent index for this volume. As I have noted, the essays are so rich in material that an index is quintessential in using the book for reference purposes. Fortunately, Father Gerostergios also provides us with a "Translator's Foreword" that gives one a synopsis of the life and works of Metropolitan Augoustinos, who, while very well-known in Greece, is not always so familiar a figure to Greek-Americans and non-Greek Orthodox in America. A preface by the Brotherhood of the Cross very nicely summarizes the importance of Metropolitan Augoustinos' words on the Divine Liturgy and should be read with attention before undertaking the reading of His Eminence's words themselves.

I can offer no criticism of these two beautiful volumes, for none is warranted. Were this not the case, I would be hesitant to make even the slightest critical remarks, since I can only rejoice that the kind of pastoral wisdom contained in a collection like this is available in English. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, its founder and President, Professor Constantine Cavarnos, and the translator, the Rev. Dr. Asterios Gerostergios, for the foresight and effort that have gone into the publication of these two volumes. I recommend this second volume to those who have drunk from the fountain of the first; and to any who have not tasted of the sweet water of these beautiful books, I recommend them as living water to a spiritually hungry soul.

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*

G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*The Church: A Bibliography.* By Avery Dulles and Patrick Granfield. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1985. Pp. 166. \$7.95, paper; \$15.00, cloth.

We welcome the publication of the present bibliography on ecclesiology which aims to assist professional theologians, priests, seminarians, and interested lay people in their study of the theology of the Church and to help them expand the theological and ecumenical dimensions of the Church. The bibliography includes titles in English and other European languages published through 1984. It is divided into fifty-one sections and includes a complete index that helps the user through cross references.

The authors are well-known Roman Catholic scholars who set forth this list of important works which is helpful for greater understanding of the theology of the Church in all its dimensions. Included are titles intended for Roman Catholic readers focusing on the nature and mission of the Church but the list is helpful to others as well. It also includes a section of on twentieth-century Orthodox and Protestant ecclesiology. Section eighteen lists works on Orthodox ecclesiology by contemporary prominent scholars. Though we are grateful to the authors for their generous gesture to include Orthodox



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On the Sixth Psalm, Concerning the Octave  
by  
Saint Gregory of Nyssa

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CASIMIR McCAMBLEY OCSO

INTRODUCTION

THIS SHORT TREATISE ON THE INSCRIPTION OR HEADING TO PSALM SIX ("For the End, a Psalm of David, Among the Hymns for the Eighth," Εἰς τὸ τέλος ἐν ὕμνοις ὑπὲρ τῆς ὀγδόης, ψαλμὸς τῷ Δαυίδ)<sup>1</sup> has for its subject the eschatological nature of the Christian life. For the Church Fathers in general, the symbol of the eighth day is preeminent.<sup>2</sup> As Jean Daniélou points out,<sup>3</sup> the seven days of the week, a figure of time, are followed by the eighth day, a symbol of eternity. It is Basil the Great, the brother of Gregory of Nyssa, who gives the clearest expression to the Christian interpretation of the week (*On the Holy Spirit*, chap. 27) by relating to it the Church's liturgical life. For him, the Lord's day or day of resurrection is the ἀρχὴ principle of the new life and is called "one day," not the "first day."<sup>4</sup>

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\*A note regarding the text, *On the Sixth Psalm, Concerning the Octave*: Within the text are located the letters "M" and "J." "M" refers to Migne's edition, PG 44; "J" refers to the critical text done under Werner Jaeger's direction and continued after his death (Leiden, 1962), vol. 5. James McDonough s.j. has arranged the critical text for this volume.

<sup>1</sup>This inscription is also prefixed in Psalm Eleven.

<sup>2</sup>For eight brief excerpts from some Fathers of the Church regarding the octave, see last note(\*) below.

<sup>3</sup>*The Bible and the Liturgy* (Notre Dame, 1956) p. 262.

<sup>4</sup>The Hebrew text for Gen. 1.5 is *yom 'echad*, "day one." This phrase,

Why does scripture say ‘one day’ and not the ‘first day’? . . . God, who made the nature of time, measured it out and determined it by intervals of days. He ordered the week to revolve from period to period upon itself, to count the movement of time, forming the week of one day revolving seven times upon itself; a proper circle begins and ends with itself. Such is also the character of eternity, to revolve upon itself and to end nowhere. If then the beginning of time is called ‘one day’ rather than the ‘first day,’ it is because Scripture wishes to establish its relationship with eternity.

If this day beginning the week is “one,” it indicates that the week, returning on itself, forms a unity. In this definition we see time governed by the seven day period, a theme reminiscent of Pythagoras. Such a seven day week represents a closed cycle constantly turning in on itself; it lacks beginning or end, and is therefore a symbol of eternity. It is this Hellenistic notion of time which Basil and the other two Cappadocians modified in light of biblical and Christian revelation.

As for Gregory the Theologian, he sees the eighth day as the octave of Easter when all creation, both spiritual and material, will be fully restored to their primal unity.

This is what the divine Solomon wishes to symbolize when he commands a part, seven to some, that is, this life; and to others, eight, or the future life. He is speaking here of good works and of the restoration (ἀποκατάστασις) of the next life. The great David seems to sing of this day in the psalms on the octave. [*On the New Lord’s Day*, PG 36.612C-13A]

It is interesting that Gregory the Theologian mentions ἀποκατάστασις (the restoration of all things in Christ), a theme dear to his friend, the bishop of Nyssa. Although the latter Gregory does not include the term ἀποκατάστασις in his treatise dealing with Psalm Six, its meaning does pervade this short work which forms a kind of appendix to his lengthy work, *On the Inscriptions of the Psalms*. A passage from this treatise implying ἀποκατάστασις runs as follows:

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instead of the conventional “first day,” suggests something more than a natural day consisting of sunrise, sunset and night; rather, it injects a mystical connotation of time to this first day and to the succeeding days.

Everyone who exercises diligence with regard to virtue has in mind the future life. Its beginning is called the “eighth,” for it follows this perceptible time when the number seven is dissolved. Therefore, the inscription ‘for the eighth’ advises us not to set our minds on this present age, but to look to the eighth . . . The present time of the seventh number which is subject to measurement will remain; the eighth will succeed it, the full day of the age to come” [J.83-84].

Despite the absence of ἀποκατάστασις, its meaning as related to the eighth day is certainly clear. Later on in this same treatise, we have this word mentioned in connection with evil: “If a troublesome, insubstantial root briefly sprouts up, it will pass away and disappear in the restoration (ἀποκατάστασις) of all things to the good” [J. 155].

As Jean Daniélou shows,<sup>5</sup> Gregory of Nyssa takes up the theme of the ogdoad from his friend, Gregory the Theologian, and develops it philosophically and mystically. As a philosopher, the former Gregory is concerned with the mystery of time, and as a Christian mystic, he desires the presence of Christ as the fulfillment of the eighth day. Note how his mature work, the *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, eloquently closes with reference to our oneness with Christ and each other:

Everyone is drawn to desire what they bless and praise, so the daughters praise the Dove (Holy Spirit) and desire by all means to become doves. And the fact that they praise the Dove shows their zeal to attain what they praise until all become one. All will look to the same goal, and every evil will be destroyed. God will be all in all, and all persons will be united together in fellowship of the God, Christ Jesus, our Lord [J. 469].

We find traces of Platonic influence in Gregory’s description of the octave in such expressions as “no longer subject to numerical succession” [J. 189, 1.21-22], “the flux of the world’s movement” [J. 189, 1.5-6], and “without argumentation or diminution” [J. 188, 1.25]. Such reference to stability versus instability pertains not so much to biological existence as to spiritual reality. This contrast does in fact lie at the heart of Gregory’s commentary on Psalm Six where he systematically

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<sup>5</sup>*The Bible and the Liturgy*, p. 270.

analyzes each of this psalm's ten verses [J. 191-93]. Such exegesis succeeds Gregory's majestic description of the octave "enfold[ing] all things in its own brilliant power" [J. 189, 1.27]. We can thus see what concern the bishop of Nyssa had for the necessity of repentance (μετάνοια) for sin since he devotes the bulk of his little treatise to this theme: "In order that the benefit of conversion might remain forever and that a person no longer need it, the psalmist prays for his enemies' conversion" [J. 192, 1.18-21]. The separation of a sinner from the Church's life and return to God is effected through tears. Here we may compare *On the Sixth Psalm* with another treatise by Gregory, *On Perfection*:

How can you implore mercy for correcting transgressions? How can you placate God? Psalm Six says, 'I have labored with my groanings and I shall wash my bed from sin with the water of my tears.' Why are these things so? Because . . . in my wrath my eye is troubled and I have become old and subject to decay [J. 191-92, 1.26/1.2], *On the Sixth Psalm*.

Every law of the Apostle and observance of the Gospel becomes our norm to receive Christ's holy body with a pure conscience; if anyone has a blemish due to sin, he cleanses it by the water of tears [J. 192, *On Perfection*].

As Reinhard Hübner points out,<sup>6</sup> Gregory stresses the pedagogical worth of disgrace as a means to return to virtue. The sacrament of repentance,<sup>7</sup> a theme mentioned in the second half of the treatise, is related to the eschatological fulfilment of creation and is effected by one's own free will. Gregory of Nyssa relates this to the symbol of the eighth day:

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<sup>6</sup>*Die Einheit des Leibes Christi bei Gregor von Nyssa* (Leiden, 1974), pp. 180-83.

<sup>7</sup>For Gregory, the beginning of philosophy is not curiosity as it is for the Greeks, but despair. Despair casts out the world's eternal return on itself and makes one rely in God through faith. Cf. Daniélou's *Platonisme et Théologie Mystique* (Paris, 1944), p. 139. Gregory's *Song Commentary* says that this despair has a positive connotation: "When the bride says, 'the guards struck me,' she boasts about her further advancement to one high. If she says this upon being wounded, the divine rod has penetrated deep within . . . The divine rod or Spirit is a comforting staff whose blows effect healing and whose fruit consists of those other good things listed by Paul, especially temperance" [J. 365-66].

The inheritance of the octave is kept for persons worthy of it. This psalm (six) distributes God's just judgment to each person according to his worthiness . . . One's own free will (προαίρεσις) effects punishment and chastisement through repentance and by making public any hidden sin" [J. 190, 1.4-191,1.5-8].

We clearly see the emphasis Gregory places upon free will grounded not in a universal, impersonal reality but in an attractive, personal response to God's gift of the eighth day.<sup>8</sup>

Notice the optimistic, if not enthusiastic tone of Gregory's treatise which begins with perhaps his most original insight, our progress<sup>9</sup> "from strength to strength" through "noble ascents" [J. 187, 1.3-4]. Gregory naturally has in mind the goal of these ascents, the eighth day (of rest) which strips away "this earthly life." Such is "our hope of glory" (ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς δόξης) [J. 193, 1.20], a phrase occurring at the treatise's end which continues the same upbeat note on which it began.

Just as God rested on the seventh day ('the seventh day is the end of creation and encompasses within itself the time coextensive with the creation of this world' [J. 188, 1.20-22,] after he had created the world, so the world, having completed its course, will rest in God on the eighth and final day. Although you would expect Gregory to quote from the Book of Revelation with regard to this eighth day in his short treatise, he certainly must have had in mind the new Jerusalem of St. John's vision. In his eager expectation of the Lord's Day, Gregory does not disparage time

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<sup>8</sup>Earlier the treatise spoke of the number eight's spiritual content with respect to Rom 7.14 ("the law is spiritual," J. 188, 1.2). As Mariette Canévet has remarked (Grégoire de Nysse et L' Hermeneutique Biblique (Paris, 1983), p. 187), this contrast between flesh and spirit is frequently cited by Gregory. He often uses Rom 7.23 ("another law at war with the law of my mind"). For example, refer to the *Song Commentary*, Second Homily [J.57]. Here one's free will, προαίρεσις, exercise itself in the struggle against sin.

<sup>9</sup>The theme of eternal progress emphasizes that for each attainment of the realization of God, new horizons continually open out. Gregory's favorite word for this advancement is ἐπέκτασις as mentioned in the opening words of *On the sixth Psalm*: "Thus he who always stretches forward (ἀεὶ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος) will never cease his good ascent through lofty thoughts." For a fuller explanation of ἐπέκτασις, cf. *Platonisme*, p. 309-26.

nor hold it in contempt. However, as a Christian influenced by Platonism, he insists on the vanity of earthly and temporal things; those persons whom he addresses in the exegetical part of the treatise dealing with Psalm Six proper consider such temporal things as they are in appearance, while their true summons consists in looking beyond them to "transcendent reality" (τῶν ὑπερκειμένων) [J. 187, 1.10]. By necessity, we as human beings must establish a foothold in time and prudently use it if we wish to meet the eighth day of eternity. Gregory claims that time "was determined with creation, for its nature is circumscribed in the week of days" [J. 188, 1.28]. Thus the week of seven days falls back on itself, thereby forming a circle. Such a measure of time's totality exists until "things endowed with motion" [J. 189, 1.5] cease and are supplanted by the octave.

Gregory corrects the Greek notion of matter's indefinite existence in time by presenting time as a way or ordered sequence. The term to express this concept is ἀκολουθία, a necessary succession and process of events in time. It is applied both in the natural and supernatural orders.<sup>10</sup> Gregory brings out another related aspect of ἀκολουθία in his much larger treatise, *On the Inscription of the Psalms*, with respect to the order of a given text, in this case, the one-hundred and fifty psalms: "The divine book of the psalms wonderfully shows us the way (to blessedness) by a systematic, natural order (διὰ τίνος τεχνικῆς τε καὶ φυσικῆς ἀκολουθίας) showing the various means for man to attain blessedness" [J.26]. Note too how ἀκολουθία as sequence is carried over to his small work on Psalm Six: "... and (Psalm Six's) important role in the order (ἀκολουθία) of the psalter" [J. 187, 1.12-13]. We thus have the temporal aspect of ἀκολουθία implied in the sequential order of the psalter, namely, the role played in it by Psalm Six.

Time, as von Balthasar points out,<sup>11</sup> is the unfolding of the parts

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<sup>10</sup>Cf. *L' Être et le Temps chez Grégoire de Nysse* by Jean Daniélou, (Leiden, 1970), p. 30.

<sup>11</sup>"D' une part, une sorte d' étalement des parties d' un être, une distension de ses membres (παράστασις); de l' autre, cet espacement est aussi un mouvement, un écoulement et par là une tension. Cette apparente contradiction se traduit dans l' ordre de la connaissance par le déchirement de la conscience en mémoire du passé (Note the emphasis Gregory places on "memory of evil deeds," J. 190, 1.18-19) et prévision du futur ("hope of glory," J.193, 1.20). *Présence et Pensée* (Paris, 1943), p. 5.

of a created being, a distention of its members, or in the words of the treatise, a “flux (ῥοώδης) of the world’s movement” [J. 189, 1.6]. One of Gregory’s chief contributions to the Christian interpretation of time has been to make its cycle (refer to the seven days’ cycle of time above) a symbol of finitude, not eternity: having arrived at its end or totality [J. 189, 1.2-3], time attains the goal of its self-enclosed existence and expires, rather, is fulfilled. Here the restless poverty of the soul as depicted by Plotinos is put to rest in the glory of the Christian resurrection or the eighth day. Thus for this eighth and final age which bears to the seven others the same relationship as the Gospel to the Law or as Sunday does to the Sabbath, Gregory of Nyssa ascribes “another sun” to rise and continually enlighten all things in its brilliant glory.

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\*Eight excerpts from the Fathers:

Irenaios, *Against Heresies*, PG 7.645B

The economy of the ark at the deluge, in which eight persons among Noah’s relatives were saved, indicates the salvific Ogdoad. Similarly, David was the eighth child among his brothers. The circumcision occurred on the eighth day, for it manifests the circumcision of the Ogdoad on high. The scriptures, when pointing to the number eight for our belief, have in mind the mystery of the Ogdoad.

Origen, *Homilies on Exodus*, PG 12.346C

The sixth day represents life here below: ‘God made the world in six days’ [cf. Gen 1.31]. During this sixth day one must gather and put in reserve provisions sufficient for the (seventh) day to come. If you amass during this time treasures of justice, mercy, and pity, they will serve as nourishment in the age to come . . . But if one gathers good works, they will live for the next day. (This ‘next day’ is the Sabbath represented by the Ogdoad).

Eusebios of Caesarea, *Commentary on the Psalms*, PG 23.120A

The octave is the day of Christ the Lord’s salvific resurrection on which we believe occurs the purgation of all sins. It is also symbolic of an infant’s circumcision by which the soul is purged through regeneration by being begotten by God. This day is better than the seventh because on it the Law is dissolved.

Athanasios, *Treatise on the Psalms*, PG 27.75D

What is the octave? It is the day of the Lord’s resurrection on which



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we receive the fruit of our labors. Indeed our enemies have been turned back with shame and confusion. This psalm (six) sings of that blessed time of repentance made for sin.

Didymos, *Treatise on the Psalms*, PG 39.1173D-76A

Psalm six contains a more divine sense in its verses. It sings about the end, because (these verses) are the most perfect contemplation on the octave. The person is circumcised spiritually by God, for it is not carnal. Circumcision is perfected in the octave because it is extolled above the six days in which the world was made and attains the seventh day, the true, holy, and delightful Sabbath. Since perfect beatitude cannot be obtained through created things, we must assume a transcendent state, the octave.

Basil the Great, *The Hexaemeron*, PG 29.52 A

The day of the Lord is without evening, without succession, and without end. It is not unknown to scripture, and it is the day that the Psalmist calls the eighth because it is outside this time of weeks. Thus whether you call it day, or whether you call it eternity, you express the same idea.

Gregory the Theologian, *On Pentecost*, PG 36.432B

For the number seven, multiplied by itself, produces fifty minus one day, and we add this by taking it as the world to come: it is at once the first and the eighth, or rather one and indestructible. And indeed we must there cease the Sabbath-keeping of our souls, so that one part of seven may be given to some, of eight to others, as certain men who have come before us have explained.

John Chrysostom, *On Compunction*, PG 47.415D-16A

What is the octave? It is that great and glorious day of the Lord, a bright furnace at whose sight the Virtues tremble and which manifests the hastening of the King. The octave calls him, declaring him to be a change of condition and a renewal of the future live. For the present life is none other than seven days which commences from the first day and is perfected in the seventh day.

Εἰς τὸν Ἑκτὸν Ψαλμὸν περὶ τῆς Ὀγδόης

## On the Sixth Psalm, Concerning the Octave

by

St. Gregory of Nyssa

1. [J. 187 & M. 608] Those persons who are advancing from strength to strength according to the prophet's blessing [Ps 83 83.6-8] and who dispose their hearts for these noble ascents, whenever they apprehend some good thought, they are led to a loftier understanding which yields for the soul an ascent on high. Thus he who always stretches forward [Phil 3.13]) will never cease his good ascent through lofty thoughts to be ever guided to comprehend transcendent reality. I have mentioned these things to you, brothers, who turn your attention to the sixth psalm and its important role in the order of the psalter: after the inheritance,<sup>1</sup> the psalm pertaining to the octave is offered to us. Indeed, you are not ignorant of the symbol of the octave which does not concur with those opinions held by the Jews. With respect to the unbecoming members of our bodies, they degrade the nobility of the mystery of the octave, the law of circumcision and [M. 609] purification following childbirth; they claim that the number [J. 188] eight signifies these things. However, we learn from the great Paul that the Law is spiritual [Rom 7.14], provided that the observance keep this number eight and prescribe circumcision for male children and a sacrifice of purification for females. We neither reject the Law nor accept it blindly, knowing that true circumcision administered by a stone knife occurs on the eighth day. You indeed know that the stone knife which severs impurity is Christ [1 Cor 10.4], the true Word [of God] and that it brings to an end the sordid flow of this life's actions once our human existence has been changed into a more divine state.

2. To clarify these matters, I will now set forth their meaning. The time of this life in the first constitution of creation is fulfilled in one week consisting of seven days. The creation of beings began on the first day, and the completion of creation terminated on the seventh day. Scripture says that the first beings were created on one day [Gen 1.5] and on the second day the second beings were created, and so

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<sup>1</sup>This refers to the inscription to Psalm Five: "For the end, a psalm of David, concerning her that inherites."

forth until the sixth day when all the rest were created. The seventh day is the end of creation and encompasses within itself the time coextensive with the creation of this world. Therefore, as no other heaven was made except this one, and no parts of the world were added to those which were made at the beginning, but creation was established in itself while remaining in its dimensions without augmentation or diminution, thus no other time existed except that which was determined with creation, for the nature of time is circumscribed in the week of days. [J. 189] When we measure time with days, beginning from the first and closing with the seventh again, we return to the first day. We always measure the totality of time through the circle of seven days until things endowed with motion pass away and the flux of the world's movement ceases. There will come, as the Apostle says [1 Cor 7.31] the things that are no longer tossed about, for they suffer neither change nor alteration: this creation will always remain like itself in succeeding ages. It contains the true circumcision of human nature and true purification which will strip away this earthly life. Sin is this filth produced in human nature (because 'In sin my mother conceived me' [Ps 50.5]. He [Christ] who purified us from sin next cleansed the universe and utterly destroyed from creatures everything that is bloody, sordid, and uncircumcised. Thus we accept the law concerning the octave which cleanses and circumcises because once time represented by the number seven comes to a close, the octave succeeds it. This day is called the eighth because it follows the seventh [M. 612] and is no longer subject to numerical succession. Another sun makes this day, the true sun which enlightens; since this sun enlightens once and for all, as the Apostle says [2 Cor 4.4], sunset no longer hides it, but it enfolds all things in its own brilliant power. This light continuously makes light for those persons worthy of it and even makes other suns out of everyone who shares in it [J. 190]. As the Gospel says, "The just will shine like the sun" [Mt 13.43]

3. In the previous psalm [five] the inheritance of the octave is kept for persons worthy of it. This psalm distributes God's just judgment to each person according to his worthiness, and the prophet [David] rightly includes repentance by mentioning the octave. For whose conscience is not at once troubled and gripped by fear and terror when mindful of Christ's fearful judgment and with the knowledge that he should change for the better? But when he considers the rigor of judgment which involves detailed questioning, in expectation of a dreadful outcome, he is terrified, not knowing the outcome of his

judgment. Therefore, his eyes are riveted on a fearful punishment: Gehenna, dark fire, the undying worm of conscience [Mt 8.12] which constantly makes the soul moan through shame and renews its pains by the memory of evil deeds. Now the suppliant beseeches God, praying that he may not be subject to his wrath at the cross-examination, nor suffer chastisement for offenses through God's anger. For judgment is considered to be the effect of wrath and anger with regard to persons condemned to a fierce chastisement of that dreadful punishment. Now psalm [six] represents by words of grief and pain the wrath and fury attributed to the punishment of wicked persons. It says [J. 191] I do not expect from [God's] wrath any reproach concerning my hidden sins by means of fearful stripes: rather, I anticipate anguish from my own confession. For the grief resulting from the wounds of stripes manifests hidden iniquities; one's own free will effects punishment and chastisement through repentance and by making public any hidden sin.

4. When Psalm Six says, "Rebuke me not in your wrath nor chastise me in your anger" [vs. 1], the psalmist seeks refuge in mercy: not so much with regard to [man's] free choice, but with respect to the weakness of human nature, the cause of evil. Although I was born in evil, I am healed by [God's] mercy. Weakness causes me pain. What is this weakness? My bones are shaken and health has vanished from them. [Psalm Six] says that [M. 613] sound thoughts steady the soul: "Heal me, Lord, because my bones are troubled" [vs. 2]. The symbolism of these words is explained in relation to those which follow: "My soul is exceedingly troubled" [vs. 3]. Why are you slow to cure me, Lord? How long will you withhold mercy? Do you not see the fleetness of human life? Remove the constraint to which our life is subject by converting my soul so that when death overtakes us, we can still be healed. No longer will a person whose sickness stems from evil and who can be healed by the memory of God suffer death because his confession belongs on earth, not in hell.

5. Then we hear words such as, How can you implore mercy from correcting transgressions? How can you placate God? Psalm Six says, "I have labored with my groaning and I shall wash my bed from sin with the water of my tears" [vs. 6] Why are these things so? Because the psalm claims that in wrath my [J. 192] eye is troubled and I have become old and subject to decay because the wrath of my enemies towards my soul has brought about this decay. If wrath alone causes such fear for an offender, then how much greater will be the hope of salvation for those in despair who not only recognize the pains

from wrath in their own lives but those caused by passion, greed, delusion, ambition, jealousy, and the entire swarm of human evils? With respect to these various enemies, Psalm Six says, "Depart from me, all you who work iniquity" [vs. 8]. It later shows the good hope offered to us from conversion. Right away the psalm speaks of conversion to God and comes to perceive God's good will for a person. It proclaims his grace and announces his bounty by saying, "The Lord has heard the voice of my petition; the Lord has accepted my prayer" [vs. 9].

In order that the benefit of conversion might remain forever and that a person no longer need it, the psalmist prays for his enemies' conversion once they have been castigated through shame. For the person who puts his hands to evil is shamed; by training, he no longer is familiar with evil and will refrain from similar future temptations. Such is the fruit of a good ascent. The fourth psalm makes a distinction between the immaterial and bodily, fleshly good; the fifth psalm, [J. 193], prays for the inheritance of this good; the sixth psalm mentions the octave, the time for this inheritance; the eighth psalm sets before one's eyes the fearful judgment which warns us sinners to shun by repentance more calamitous results. Then the repentance duly offered to God proclaims [M. 616] a benefit for us: "The Lord has listened to my voice with tears when I turned to him" [vs. 9]. Once this has come about, and that this benefit may abide for the future, the prophet [David] beseeches [God] to destroy through shame hostile thoughts. Such lawless, hostile thoughts cannot otherwise be vanquished unless through shame. A deep gulf is established for those persons who have lived in evil, while shame has erected a wall of sin in oneself. We therefore say, "Let all my enemies be put to shame and sorely troubled" (vs. 10). My enemies are domestic ones and proceed from my heart to defile a person. By quickly vanquishing them with shame, our hope of glory which is free from this shame will receive thanks be to God, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

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## Orthodox Monasticism Today: Reflections

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HIEROMONK LAURENCE

AS WE BEGIN THIS CONSIDERATION OF THAT LAY MOVEMENT known as monasticism, let us invoke the same Holy Spirit whose coming we celebrate Sunday. His grace has gathered us here for this symposium, so let us hope and pray it will deepen within us an awareness of the critical situation confronting the church as the present century winds to a close. Let us open our minds and hearts to respond in a positive and enthusiastic way, so that our reflections will not languish in the realm of theory and speculation. Let us seek the courage and conviction to rise above petty human considerations and break out of the paralysis that grips so much of our attitude toward church life. Let us truly launch out as did the Apostles and the Fathers in their own day. Let us cease invoking them in a one-dimensional, cerebral way, but let us make the dynamism of their responses our own, thereby bringing some real wisdom and true understanding to the subject at hand. For our people, like all peoples of the earth, stand on the brink of a new era today. This era signals either new life and vitality for our Church or certain demise. It is up to us to respond to divine grace and initiate a new surge of growth in faith, spiritual life, and understanding not only in ourselves, but in all those others with whom we come into contact.

As a beggar of that same grace, I come before you today, and, to paraphrase a remark attributed to Father Thomas Hopko, I would like to speak to you not from the ink of this subject but from the blood of our experience at New Skete. I am painfully aware of my own limitations, among which is the simple fact that I am not a

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\*An address given at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology.

professional theologian in the technical sense in which this is true of you. Accordingly, I do not presume to address you from the ink of technical theological study. On the other hand, I have lived the monastic life in a monastic community setting for almost thirty years. That fact enables me, by the grace of God, to be a theologian in the sense in which all monastics were historically called theologians. From this background, then, I can speak to you from the blood of the experience of this lifestyle.

Furthermore, while our communities were actually received into Orthodoxy just six and a half years ago, we exist in Cambridge now for twenty years. Those who know us intimately can attest to the "Orthodoxy" of our life even while we were canonically Uniates. I introduce this aside for two reasons: First, because it will give you a little clearer idea of where we are coming from and, second, because many Orthodox frequently lack knowledge of the reality of the Unia and therefore fail to appreciate the values, insights, and spirituality that have been preserved among the Uniates in spite of the vicissitudes of their history and the undesirable character of their canonical status.

Finally, I would like to emphasize a truth that is frequently lost in the shuffles of formal papers at such a gathering as this. No matter how professional and necessary our involvement in theological studies, it is the life of Christ in each of us that must be deepened at all times. Therefore, whether we speak on the sacraments or translation, on liturgical life or stewardship, or whether we consider the inner life itself from an academic point of view, we must recall that this is simply part of the whole of that mystery we call life in the Church. Practically, this means that my personal inner life cannot be ignored because of academic theological considerations, for the final step in that process will be a kind of spiritual materialism, every bit as destructive of life as secular materialism.

I mention this caution, which, by the way, I aim at myself as well, because there is the tendency among Orthodox to fail to integrate various aspects of church life in one's own person, especially among those of us deeply involved in scholarship and academic pursuits. We betray a kind of outlook that would make of the Church some sort of gigantic university or corporation, and our particular fields the various departments of that huge institutional bureaucracy. Such an attitude, regardless of how unintentional, tends to drown us in the ink while depriving us of all the vitality that comes only from the blood of life!



*The Angel at the Tomb*

With these somewhat lengthy preliminary remarks, then, I invite you to join me in considering a gospel scene we have heard many times in the paschal season that has just closed. Let us attend to the angel confronting the myrrhbearing women as they neared the tomb of the Savior. Recall, if you will, the anxiety of these good women as they approached the tomb, and the shock that must have been theirs upon being told that they must not seek the living among the dead. Understandably, these good ladies did not fully comprehend the power of this angelic revelation. They were only of this mind: to use the ointments they brought along to anoint, to soothe, and, therefore, to preserve, as it were, the lifeless corpse of one they loved so much, even if only in death! Thus, they were reacting to the events of the last few days rather than seeing them with the eyes of living faith! Their hearts, as we know, had still not been changed.

“Why seek the living among the dead?”

Are we all not just like those women? Is this not the general picture of Orthodoxy? The Church herself places this scene before us in the paschal services, but we go our merry way, ignoring the message of the gospel story. Two thousand years after the resurrection, we — clergy and laity alike — day after day make our way to the regions of the dead past while the very words of the angel are still ringing in our ears: “Why seek the living among the dead?”

We are forever attempting to preserve what is dead past, thus actually ignoring the Living One who beckons to us at every moment of life. Yet, it is not only the words of the angel that would awaken us. The words of Christ himself to Mary said the same thing: “Do not touch me!” Jesus is telling Mary that he cannot be clutched as one clutches some thing, a dead object. He is the living one, the very source, indeed, of life. On another occasion, too, before he suffered, Jesus again made reference to this same idea when he directed us to let the dead bury the dead.

This scene from the gospel clamors for our attention today more than ever before. It has implications of life and death for Orthodoxy. The angel’s words are directed as much to me and to you as to the holy women. They are especially directed to us for the simple reason that we are teachers in the Church; we must lead others.

Running after the dead, trying to keep what we love from disappearing into the musty world of corruption and decay, is not characteristic of us Orthodox alone. It is indeed all too human an attitude.

Yet exactly because we are Orthodox, we seem peculiarly prone to this. Because we do not notice this message, because in fact we are proud to have the past that is ours — because of this, we are being crippled by the very thing that should give us life. Our preoccupation with the past is not all good by any means, and it is time we consider it from a different point of view.

What is our exaggerated fascination with the past? We hope beyond hope to prevent decay and corruption; we want to guard against letting the remains of the dead past fall prey to the inevitable worm and moth. Such an attitude betrays the fact that we are ourselves lacking in integration. For intellectually we believe and preach a risen, living Christ, but this reality fails to touch our hearts, i.e., our entire being. In a word, we fail to unite what we know with how we live. We fail to come to grips with the truth that life is alive; it is not dead. We fail to practice what we preach: a living Lord.

Is not the angel at the tomb the messenger of the Father? Is it not the Father himself who, through Christ, leads us away from death to life? The Father is simply trying to awaken us to the reality that his Son lives.

But where is the Living One? Tucked away somewhere in heaven? Can we relegate Christ to somewhere? Is he not, as Life incarnate, just here before us, on the verge of every moment that is about to be? And is that not really what life is all about? Our struggles to be in touch with the Ultimate of realities that is God put us in touch with Christ himself who calls us, so to speak, to be creative in our every moment of continuing life. For when life ceases, it is not simply dead life, it is death itself. But our belief is that life is eternal. When all is said and done, this is what we imply by saying that we made after the image and likeness of God, simply that we are living beings. We have the good fortune of sharing life itself with the Author of life. And our faith in the resurrection refers to this, that Jesus has conquered death: we shall live forever.

It would be fascinating to pursue this further now if we had the time, for this line of thought can, at first glance, appear very threatening. At any rate, as Orthodox we have been imbued with such respect for the past that we never question our understanding of it for one moment. Accordingly, neither do we question our understanding of tradition. We cannot really be blamed, then, for feeling uneasy in the company of such a consideration as this. Yes, it is indeed no great revelation to say that the reason we are so uneasy lies in a fear of

heresy. However, we are not trying to be heretics here: we are trying to reflect on ways and means of freeing the Church from anything that is crippling her work and living experience among people today. We want to do our small part to make the Church what the Lord wants her to be. But is that a museum? Let us answer unequivocally: It is not!

Since our exaggerated interpretation of tradition is forever intent on choking us with the past, it therefore frustrates the workings of grace. And our curious attempts to interpret and speak about tradition in a way that will make sense, are simply so much obfuscation. Thus, we have become enamored of referring to tradition with the capital *T* or to tradition with the small *t*. But the fact of the matter is, we don't have to use such double-talk. Tradition is either genuine or it is nonsense. Genuine tradition is wholesome. It does not reek of dead men's bones. It cuts through human existence with the pungency of true life. It gives life to all who embrace it; it does not suffocate or bury us beneath the dead usages of the past. It has nothing to do with the pious platitudes that we so often mouth to our people but which, quite honestly, make no sense. It is not lingo, not some kind of shoptalk only for those on the in.

Furthermore, our misunderstanding of authentic tradition is reinforced by fear. As we noted, we are perpetually fearful of falling into heterodoxy. So, this fear prevents our launching into the unknown to really serve the living God, that we might glean some true life for ourselves and for our people. Today Orthodoxy is hardly growing, in spite of would-be statistics. All we have to do is look around us, if we want to know the truth. But what do we do about it?

It does not seem conceivable that the Fathers could have been so paranoid of change. It does not seem that they could have been so anxiety-ridden in the face of the challenges of their lives. And while dealing with this matter implies pain and fear, we must confront it. If we are free enough from the fears of "the old man" and brave enough, we can face this truth. But facing it does take personal freedom and personal dedication to the truth. Usually we do not even dare to reexamine how we look at things, how we understand things, much less attempt to re-understand them. We cannot seem to face the fact that the past was once the present. That is what makes true tradition so powerful, that it is the past that was once now, working in the present for the good of this and coming generations. It is this that made Orthodoxy grow.

But our response has strangled the life out of tradition so that it can no longer spearhead new life for this and coming generations. On the one hand, we have isolated and embellished the concept of tradition and staunchly defended it, probably first and foremost because of what we see as the West's betrayal of tradition with a capital T. The upshot of this is that we have made tradition a kind of graven image. We have, in spite of our Orthodoxy, fallen into idolatry! Thus, we worship the traditions of God, rather than the God of tradition. It takes no great genius to see that this is why our Church manifests so little authentic spiritual life.

Here, one feels the need of reaffirming the priority and absolute character of doctrine. Normally, such an aside would not be necessary. But with our paranoia about heterodoxy, we must make it clear that this discussion is not about church teaching. We have no difficulties with the dogmatics of the Church. Our discussion, it must be recalled, deals with the fairy-tale ideas that so many Orthodox play with — and we are not excluded from their number! — and with the unhealthy and persistent preoccupation with the trappings of the Church and her everyday life that trip us up continually.

Finally, if we would refer once more to the gospel scene we began with, we will note that the angel had another piece of advice for the women: "Do not be afraid!" This, too, is directed at us. And how shall we respond to it? Are we to be outdone in courage and openness by those poor, uneducated women? Shall we turn from this disturbing scene and take cover where there is narry a threat or a risk? Is our love for Christ and his Church really only sentimentality?

### *The Scene Today*

Once we have made tradition a kind of god, it is no great distance to its natural offspring, nominalism. Nominalism is another term for phariseeism and is directly opposed to authenticity. Thus, by subtle moves, we have come full circle to find ourselves once again confronting the dead past. And of course, the very nature of the dead past is the absence of life. God is certainly not there.

Now there are many areas of Orthodox church life wherein this attitude can be verified, but the truth of it is most painfully — and I repeat: most painfully — clear in Orthodox monasticism in this hemisphere. First of all, there is barely any monasticism on these shores. Nor does there seem to be any great renaissance in the offing, in spite of the would-be monastics here and there. If and when

any monasticism does begin, it is always scarred by clericalism, which is offensive and directly contradictory to the authentic monastic character. Finally, and with no intent to judge the conscience and heart of the people concerned, most of the monasticism we have in this part of the world is exactly the kind of idolatry of the past, the nominalism and the general reductionism of which we have been speaking. Given this, it is not to be wondered at that monasticism is really quite an unpopular thing. We have but to notice how so many of our hierarchs and clergy disdain the very thought of monastic life and how they move quickly to discourage anyone interested in it. This latter, by the way, can be amply documented.

Throughout the Church, whether here or abroad, monastic life is imprisoned by nominalism and reductionism not unlike the trap than ensnares so much Protestantism through its literalism and fundamentalism. The spiritual life encouraged and practiced is itself a form of idolatry: the Jesus Prayer is flaunted along with prayer ropes, and this is passed off as hesychasm. Monks and nuns are perpetually concerned with what they will not eat, what they will wear, and what *typikon* they will follow, but little concern seems to be spent on how they will save their souls. Our clothing has long enjoyed a life of its own, disproving the age-old dictum that the habit doesn't make the monk. Though we notice that some of those who love to parade in monastic garb do not hesitate at times to exchange this garb for the most fashionable of street clothes and jewelry to be worn in all kinds of non-monastic settings. Others are into all kinds of extreme ascetic practices such as a minimum of sleep and nourishment, and these extraordinary and stressful conditions bring on hallucinatory reactions that we then proceed to label as mystical experiences of God and his saints. The whole of life is more and more a matter of externals and superstitions we are unwilling to part with.

Obedience, the real essence of monastic vocation and the visible sign of dedication, has few friends. Just as people living in the secular world in and out of the Church dismiss any kind of obedience out of hand, so do monks and nuns run from it; it is as repulsive to them as it is unfamiliar. And some even belittle a life of obedience as a simple practice of personality cult! Thus, monastics do not wish to live in community, for life together implies at least obedience, if not love. This shying away from community life means we have a variety of would-be monks and nuns wandering about by themselves, living as they please, some more responsibly than others, but nonetheless

all of them really in obedience to no one. And anyone who wants to live this way does so simply by approaching a bishop who will, doubtlessly, tonsure anything that walks. Nevertheless, neither the candidate nor the hierarch have any experiential knowledge of monastic life. It seems we have the impression that any and every celibate is thereby a suitable candidate for monastic tonsure. All of this leads naturally and easily to scandal, further destroying the already bad reputation of monastic life. To top it all, everyone is an expert on monasticism.

Monastics generally love to play house. It is of no real importance to be one's self, much less to know one's self as the philosopher advises. Gone is the understanding that monastic life is not a child's game of trying to see who can outdo whom. There is a craving for individual asceticism that can feed personal pride rather than a striving for the true mysticism that is no less than a struggle to meet real life, and, therefore, the truth. Our would-be monastics want all the consolations of monasticism without the struggle that goes with a genuine attempt to climb the ladder of divine ascent.

One of the upshots of all this faulty thinking is that monastic profession is no longer the sacrament that redeems the real world: the self, others, all creation. It is rather the canonization of the dead past, failing to inspire a movement of freedom and creativity as well as resistance to corruption in the church and in society. It celebrates a cheap self-righteousness and triumphalism of fantasy over reality, the fantasy of unreal day-dreaming about what it was like in old Russia, Greece, or God-knows-where. Therefore, monks and nuns are nothing more than cheap imitations of the past. This necessarily implies a non-relevance to people today and a deep-seated selfishness. It is certainly not the spirit of self-immolation before God for the good of one's soul and others. So, we dine on the museum leftovers of Russia and Greece, of Serbia and Byzantium or Athos, and we pose for posterity wearing the laurels of the desert Fathers to whom we pay lip service but no real reverence of understanding and emulation.

If monasticism was a social step upward in the past, in our country and in our times it is simply a nonsensism in the minds of most. It is in fact an escape from the real world of responsibility, for its members are absolutely not about to face themselves or the world they live in. They have no interest in authentic personal growth but solely in mimicking forms. They manifest no authentic creativity of spirit and therefore inspire no one. The beauty of the human face,

meaning the infinite possibilities open to human growth — all this is buried in favor of an escape from true freedom and individuality into the security that comes from conformity. Wholeness is eschewed; neurotic preoccupation with the self pursued!

One final point we can note about Orthodox monasticism today, for we cannot give this whole picture the detailed attention it deserves, is that of the liturgical life. To what a state of despair the Church's liturgical life is reduced by the sloppy, hasty, and perfunctory manner in which it is celebrated! To be sure, we are very proud of not missing one word, all according to that other idol we worship, the *typikon*; but there is no real concern for the beauty and power of the liturgical offices. This abuse of the *Opus Dei*, the monastic work of God, *par excellence*, is further reflected in the general attitude toward manual labor. Unfortunately, monks and nuns seem to want as little hard work as they want obedience!

Thus, by failing to maintain an independent economy, the monasticism of today cannot risk the anger of the hierarchy or clergy or people at large by courageously standing up to abuses in the church.

Our final point is monastic prayer. We will not even enter into a critique of monastic prayer; this would be a tome in itself. Suffice it here to state simply that how they pray is seen by how they live; once again, no authenticity of life.

### *Hope for the Future*

The above is so dismal a picture, that I feel impelled to apologize for bringing it before you. But it is crucial that we look at it squarely. Something must be done about this if there is to be a healthy church life, for the latter is dependent on a healthy monastic life.

If we are to come to a real understanding of what healthy monasticism implies, we must return once more to that gospel passage of the angel and the holy women. This scene is especially apropos monastic life for the life of monasticism is exactly the epitome of surging toward more abundant life and a genuine creating of new life in every moment. What, then, does this imply?

First, it would seem well to do away with calling monasticism the angelic life. That parallel may have had its power in ages gone by, but it definitely does not enhance our understanding of monastic life today. We neither are angels, nor should we desire to be. To be human is what the Lord has made us, and to strive after some kind of resemblance to bodiless powers is not a virtue but, in fact, an insult to the

wisdom and goodness of the Creator. Enough of angelic life! We have our hands full simply living a decent, productive, and fruitful human life: And this is the will of God for us. Let us not complicate the issue by talk that clouds the truth and brings no light on the subject.

Monasticism is nothing less than radical self-transformation. It is necessarily lived on the level of the deepest realities, far from even a hint of nominalism or obsession with forms. True monasticism, and not its cheap imitation, is simply true Christianity and therefore, as Ecclesiasticus tells us, nothing less than an ordeal. It is a pilgrimage that implies a movement into the unknown. It is a life of repentance that means the constant willingness to embrace *metanoia*, i.e., to change one's mind with the purpose of softening the heart, for repentance in Greek means changing the way we look at everything; it does not mean some kind of emotional feelings or remorse or regret prompted by mistaken notions of guilt. But our fear is forever urging us to opt for security, to letting ourselves be enslaved to forms of a past that is totally artificial because it is our invented pining over what the past must have been like.

It is imperative for our own understanding as well as for those to whom we wish to impart true knowledge that we clearly see the issues here. There can be no elitism in monasticism, yet, by its very professional character, it points out and presents to our consciousness the paradigm of the kingdom of Heaven that is for all people everywhere. Monasticism is the very icon of the kingdom, and as such it shows us that it is a lay movement *par excellence*. Even historically, it developed more as a protest against clerical corruption in the Church than as a mystical and symbolic substitute for the martyrdom that was to be no more. Monastic life is the fullness of life in Christ, for it is a radical living out of the psalms and especially the gospels, and therefore, an experience of what everyone should be. As the martyrs were the seed of faith, so should authentic monastic communities and their members be the lifeblood of the mystical body of Christ.

But true life is with people. As we noted above, to invoke the image of the bodiless powers frustrates the goal of human life as it was intended by the Creator. Accordingly, authentic monasticism should reinforce all that is good in the human condition, for the process of *theosis* cannot be accomplished by despising the humanness of our situation. Furthermore, history clearly shows that the anchorites and lone-wolf ascetics were not the ideal of searching for God. Their fleeing from the human situation reflects not a desirable attitude, but an



aberration in the human mind-set. Recent scholarship points out the long overlooked truth that the word *monachos* was never the equivalent of the hermit or recluse. Rather, it referred to the celibate who was alone by reason of not being married. Furthermore, the same word *monachos* was also employed by translators to express the Hebrew word *yahid*, or exile, and in this context *monachos* meant that the individual had no lasting home in this world. It should be noted once and for all that the eremitical life was never an ideal, and usually it was not even encouraged, because it was, by its very nature, a real ego-trip. Whoever would be a monastic had to be ready to give up the society of this world with a view to joining the wilderness society made over according to the principles of the kingdom of God. This society is nothing less than a microcosm of the Church at large; it is a smaller, local church in the fullest sense of this term. Thus, *monachos* refers to everyone who takes up the cross of community life for the sake of the divine and ultimate community, the kingdom of God.

We should not forget in speaking of monasticism that Christ himself lived among people. Nowhere in the gospels does he indicate that we should strive to live by ourselves, apart from the community of others. Nor is there any indication anywhere that Jesus considered human life something to be frowned upon, something to be ashamed of. These less than properly Christian attitudes arise from excessive responses to the hedonistic and pleasure seeking tendencies forever present in our midst. But the true Christian outlook is not so manicheistic; rather, it is a persistent attempt, guided by reason, to live a wholesome life of balance and moderation in all things. Our human condition is hardly a curse; it is a blessing from the Almighty himself just as all the rest of creation is. It is so fashionable for us to speak of the sacramental quality of all creation, but we don't want to face the sacramentality of the human condition. It is time we gave this some serious and honest thought.

Thus, monastic life that is healthy is one that attempts to cooperate harmoniously with the Creator. In our communities in Cambridge, for example, we like to speak about monasticism with a human face. We do this even in the face of ridicule from some would-be experts, and we full well realize that we are inviting associations with the "communism with a human face" espoused by the Dubcek regime in Czechoslovakia. Nevertheless, we feel it imperative that no matter how the rigorists protest, life should be one of balance: seeking God must always be done in the context of a healthy life. In practice, this allows

us to obey the divine mandate that we support and assist each other in the development of our potentials before God and man. Such an attitude assures us that the individual and the community are enriched by this growth, and in turn, the Church at large benefits from this creative concern for her members. It follows, furthermore, that each individual community should be unique, reflecting the exact differences of each member and the unique personalities they bring to life in community.

So, too, the personal charism of the founder, or of the superior, should help color and enrich the life of all together. Here we note that life should come before the typicon, and not vice versa. The local *typikon* should expound upon the life as it is lived by the monastics, and not propose enslavement to some perfunctory execution of rules and regulations from another time and place.

Even more important than the need for competence in the superior is the role played by the spiritual father in monastic communities. Here, too, as Orthodox we pay a lot of lip service to the principle of spiritual fatherhood, but there is little real practice of it. Authentic monastic history, whether western or eastern, shows us that monastics who are not disciples of a spiritual father are bound to slip not only into subtle forms of self-deception but even madness. Yet, because we are more the children of our own society than we care to admit, unwittingly or not, we downgrade this vital practice in favor of modern, individual self-assertion and independence. Again, there goes any balance!

In the light of this, we have to review our knowledge of church history. This of necessity includes monastic history and practice — although a competent and complete history of this area of Orthodox experience has not been written and we therefore have to work with some very sketchy information. We have to re-evaluate and come to a true appreciation of the role of the spiritual father, for it is the personification, if you will, of man's ongoing struggle with death and the powers of death and corruption in individual and church life. The person of the spiritual father is the beacon of inspiration and direction for all who aspire to more abundant life in Christ. Everything we know about life and Scripture tells us of the principle of generation. Everything that is alive and growing within us has its source, its genitor, in actual life. This is especially so with the birth, growth, and maturation of spiritual life. This is the way authentic, living tradition and wisdom is handed from one generation to the

next in all its fullness. This implies more than the spiritual counselling, guidance, or direction that usually goes by the name of spiritual fatherhood. It is the spiritual father's responsibility to goad monastic individuals and communities toward ever greater depth of life and spiritual awareness, to do battle with the alienation and idolatry rampant within the disciple. It is his to see to it that the balance of authentic Christian living is never lost either to the individual monk or nun or to the monastic community. If he fails at this, if the disciples fail to appreciate this, or if this is not present for one reason or another, we are left with the death that comes from empty forms and rituals of life that characterize a museum.

The genuine spiritual father tradition must be respected. It seems hardly likely that those who have not literally passed through the crucible of discipleship can ever be spiritual fathers; yet, for the most part this is what we have today. The essence of spiritual fatherhood does not lie in erudition or professionalism. Training in the usual sciences of church education as well as those of modern civilization are certainly desirable, and valuable, and necessary; but beneath this has to be found the discerning powers and personal experience that are indispensable to this office in the Church. This is *par excellence* a charism, freely dispensed by the Lord himself. Furthermore, ordinary human abilities and talents serve to support and expand this ministry of grace.

The spiritual father cannot afford to be himself an idolator of the dead past or its forms. Accordingly, spiritual fathers do not invite this role upon themselves; their role is something we find others have discovered in them. In turn, however, the spiritual father, by his being in touch with reality (especially in his own time and place), becomes the embodiment of the tradition in the here-and-now.

On the practical, everyday level, it is he who leads his disciples, and indeed the whole community, to a balanced and healthy life in faith and charity. This experience of spiritual father and disciple in monasticism is not some kind of sentimental journey. It is an arena of human interaction wherein are born the gifts of health and freedom and integration of life; in a word, their experience is the practice of creative living and the martyrdom of living in the image of the Trinity.

### *Conclusion*

With these broad and seemingly sweeping strokes, we have tried to indicate the alarming situation in which monasticism finds itself.

Neither time nor space allow us to expand this general description as it truly deserves nor to propose a step by step outline of reform. Nevertheless, there seems to be enough material here to provide ample food for thought as well as action if we would but take to heart the message of the angel at the tomb.

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## Reviews

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*Paths and Means to Holiness.* By Constantine Cavarnos. Trans. and ed. Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi. Etna, CA: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 1986. Pp. xi (unnumbered) + 57. \$5.00, paper.\*

Constantine Cavarnos' *Paths and Means to Holiness* has now had at least four lives. It was originally delivered in English as "The Ways of Sanctity" at the Orthodox Theological Seminary of Saint Tikhon of Zadonsk in South Canaan, Pennsylvania, on October 3, 1978, as part of the series "Called to Be Saints" and published in English in the seminary's yearbook, *Tikhonaire*, in May of 1979. A Greek version appeared in serial form in Athens in *The Orthodox Press* from August 31 to October 1979 and was then published as a small book with prologue, epilogue, amplifications in the main text, indexes, and many hagiographical illustrations in 1980, and in a second edition in 1985. Now we have a fourth appearance in a new translation by His Grace, Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi. The present edition is based on the Greek text of the second, enlarged Athens edition of 1985. It reads exceptionally well, and the two appendices on "A Discourse on Monasticism" and "A Discourse of Those Living in the World" add to the attractiveness and usefulness of the volume.

It would not be amiss to say that Cavarnos' *Paths and Means to Holiness* has become something of a religious classic. Using biblical and patristic sources, the author demonstrates that the Orthodox Christian views the saint as one who has partaken of divine grace, is inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit, is free from every vice, and is a possessor of every virtue. These virtues are faith, patience, humility, chastity, and spiritual love. The categories of saints are enumerated as the apostles, martyrs, prophets, hierarchs, monastic saints, and

the righteous. Saint Peter Damascene had listed the first five; Saint Nikodemos the Hagiorite added the sixth. *Askesis*, spiritual endeavor or training, is necessary for achieving holiness and embraces bodily practices and mental practices. The physical practices include fasting, vigils, standing, prostrations, and silence, and the spiritual practices involve repentance, concentration, meditation, inner attention, and prayer. More than anything else, prayer is noted as drawing divine grace to man and uniting him with God. Dr. Cavarnos concludes the main body of his work with the statement that "In a word, from this union is born the *theosis* of man, which is longed for by all . . . and is the final end and purpose, God's foremost and highest goal" (p. 30).

*Repentance and Paths and Means to Holiness* provide eloquent testimony to the scriptural and patristic basis of the Orthodox Christian faith and Greek Orthodox theology. They also provide highly readable, highly competent, and highly authoritative presentations of some of the most fundamental aspects of Greek Orthodox religiosity.

John E. Rexine  
Colgate University

\*The original Greek book edition of 1980 was reviewed in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 26, No. 3 (Fall 1981) 237-38. The reader is referred to this source for more details about the Cavarnos publication.

G O T R 32 (87)

*Questioning Back: The Overcoming of Metaphysics in Christian Tradition.* By Joseph Stephen O'Leary. A Seabury Book. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985. Pp. 8 (unnumbered) + 225. \$19.95, cloth.

If the author of this book really believes that he has himself written in a language that will replace already traditionally accepted theological and philosophical language, he will be sadly disappointed. The language used in this book will be just as foreign to Orthodox readers as the language of Western metaphysics that Joseph O'Leary is so anxious to replace. But more than the language, it is the metaphysical thought and its impact on theology that the author would have us overcome for "Metaphysics has been normative for Western thinking for two and a half millenia, the governing logos of our culture, identical with the force of reason itself . . . Metaphysics has become questionable in a radical sense and the inadequacy of its procedures

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## Philotheos Revisited: The Reawakening of Mission Outlook

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STANLEY SAMUEL HARAKAS

IT IS FOR ME A DISTINCT HONOR AND PRIVILEGE TO HAVE BEEN asked to offer the inaugural Annual Lecture on Orthodox Missions sponsored by the Endowment Fund for Orthodox Missions at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology by the parish of the Annunciation in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in honor of Father Alexander and Presbyteria Pearl Veronis. I have chosen as my subject a turn-of-the-century novel by theologian Nicholas Ambrazis entitled *The Greek Orthodox Missionary Philotheos*.

The significance of this novel for Greek Orthodox missionary studies is that it is one of the earliest, if not the first expression of missionary interest in modern Greek-speaking Orthodoxy. It is instructive for study in that it reflects at once those principles of Orthodox missiology which have characterized the best missionary thinking and practice in Eastern Christianity over the twenty centuries of its existence, as well as some negative and positive characteristics of missionary thought in its own time.

First, I propose to describe briefly the author and the setting in which the novel was written, providing some bibliographical context. Second, I shall describe in some detail the charming, sometimes seriously instructive, and sometimes quite naive, yet always entertaining, story-line of the novel. I shall then analyze the missionary theory conveyed by the novel, noting both its strong points, as well as some of the problematics related to it. Finally, I shall make a connection between Ambrazis' *Philotheos* and the rise of mission interest in the United States, and in particular, in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania parish

of the Annunciation.

*The Author and the Setting*

To my knowledge, the only Greek Orthodox theologian to deal with this "first Greek missionary novel" as he calls it, was Elias Boulgarakis, who published an extensive descriptive and analytical article on it in the missionary periodical *Porefthendes* in its Greek edition.<sup>1</sup> I am drawing extensively on this study in the first and second parts of my presentation today.

The author, Nicholas H. Ambrazis, was a well-known Orthodox theologian who lived from 1854 to 1926. He obtained his theological education at the Patriarchal Theological School of Chalke, but unlike most of its graduates, Ambrazis was not ordained, but followed the tradition of the lay-theologian. Ambrazis served ably as a preacher of the Word in Smyrna, Turkey, and as a teacher in several Greek towns, including service at the Barbakeion Lykeion in Athens. He served as president of the religious society "Apostolos Pavlos" in 1902, was a member of the "Anaplasia" religious society, and was a contributor to its journal by the same name.

In addition, he was an author of significant theological works, most of which dealt with inter-church and inter-religious topics. His first work, entitled *Protestantism*, was published at age 22 in 1876. Some other writings of interest are a study of the possibilities of the union of the Orthodox and Anglican Churches, published in 1892, and a two-volume study on the relationship of the Orthodox Church with other Christian churches, published in Athens in 1902 and 1903 respectively. His most famous work, however, is a two-volume book entitled *Rabbi Isaac M. Who Comes to Believe in Christ* published in 1901 and 1906, which was translated into three languages. His interests can be characterized as proto-ecumenical. Boulgarakis appears to me to have overstated the truth when he said: "It is not overly bold to characterize his theological work with the contemporary term 'ecumenical theology' because even though he lived in a time of powerful confessional conflicts, he was imbued with a truly ecumenical spirit."<sup>2</sup> But at least, Ambrazis' publication record does indicate a strong interest in relating with other Christian and religious traditions, without the overly defensive fears of his contemporaries.

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<sup>1</sup> *Porefthendes*, 10 (1968) 2-4, 41-46, 55-56, 59-62.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 59.

Ambrasiz published his missionary novel in 1892, while an instructor at the Barbakeion Lykeion.<sup>3</sup> We have no statement from the author on his reasons for addressing the issue of missionary activity among the Greek Orthodox by this means. He did not write in a scholarly fashion about the topic, nor did he ever involve himself in any organized missionary activity. Nevertheless, his other publications show him to be a person interested in what we would call to-day, "outreach." We have already noted his ecumenical concerns; the book on Rabbi Isaac M. is an inter-religious effort, in which he presents the conversion of a Jew to Christianity. Outreach to Protestants, to Roman Catholics and to Jews could certainly have provoked a desire for outreach to pagan non-believers, thus rounding out a spiritual desire to obey the commission of Christ to the Apostles, and by extension to the Church "to go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" (Mk 16.15).

As we shall see immediately below, there appears to be some possible autobiographical aspects to the story, at least in its beginning pages. Ambrasiz clearly knows of the impressive missionary work of the Russian Orthodox Church. As a student of theology at Chalke, he was a resident of Constantinople, ruled by a Turkish Muslim sultan, and could not have but reflected on the total absence of missionary work by Greeks in comparison to the Russians. While he could never, for all practical purposes, expect that the Greek Orthodox could do missionary work among the Turkish Muslims, without suffering the penalty of death, it would not be beyond the realm of possibility for the Patriarchate of Constantinople to consider undertaking missionary work among those who have never been exposed to Christianity.

The story begins with a meeting between the principal of the theological school and the graduating Philotheos. The dialogue is instructive. Like the author, Philotheos Atheniades flies in the face of the conventional wisdom of graduates of Chalke by refusing to be ordained, thus forfeiting his diploma. In the novel, Philotheos rejected the clergyman's vocation proposed for him by the school's principal, and countered with questions of his own that may well have some elements of autobiography hidden in them:

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<sup>3</sup> Bibliographical information is drawn from Boulgarakis' article mentioned above and from N. Th. Bougatsos' article on Ambrasiz in the *Threskevtike kai Ethike Enkyklopaideia*, (Athens, 1963), 2, p. 270. He furnishes the 1892 date.

"All these (arguments regarding ordination) are good and holy aims," answered Philotheos, "but what of Christ's commandment?"

"Which commandment?" the principal of the school inquired.

"The commandment, 'Go ye and teach all nations' (Mt 28.19)," answered Philotheos. "As long as even a single unbeliever lives on the earth, unaware of Christ and His holy Gospel, this commandment obligated all Christians to strive for their conversion. Why are the other churches working through their missions among the unbelievers? Who is to teach them? Who is to enlighten them? Who will fulfill the commandment of Christ to work for their salvation, unless we be the ones, who are called Christians? If we all become bishops and we remain in one and the same place, what will become of the work of mission among the unbelievers?"

In response to the principal's counter-argument that it was enough for the Orthodox that the Russian Orthodox Church had missions in Japan and China, Ambrazis presents Philotheos as appealing both to contemporary Greek national sentiments and to the ancient patriarchal tradition of mission.

"If the Russian Orthodox Church is working with such splendid results among the unbelievers, fulfilling the commandment of Christ, why should the Hellenic Orthodox Church stay aloof," answered Philotheos, adding that "this very Church had done splendid work in bringing the Slavs, the Bulgarians and many other nations."<sup>4</sup>

But why a novel? And why a novel which at least in its publishing history was perceived to be so simply and delightfully written so as to be presented as being a "children's book?" Perhaps, like Apostolos Makrakis at an earlier age, he despaired that the "older generation," set firmly in its ways, would ever renew the missionary drive of the Greek Orthodox Church. Significantly, Boulgarakis surmised that relatively few people of his day found much interest in the theme of

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<sup>4</sup>Quotations from the novel are slightly revised versions of *The Greek Orthodox Missionary Philotheus Among the Savages*, trans. Angel D. Sedero-canellis (Lancaster, PA, 1948), pp. 6-7.

Orthodox missions when he counted the small number of sponsors his mission book attracted, compared to the number that supported his other publications. And like Makrakis, it may be that Ambrazis felt that he had little alternative than to express his concern for mission, forming it in a fashion which would be appealing to future generations. We can detect an element of impatience in the words he places on the lips of Philotheos when the principal claimed poverty as an excuse for not doing missionary work.

Many were the opportunities of the past and many good things were possible. Other obstacles may have existed to prevent expansion of the work in the past, but we can do more in the future. Why is it that the Russian Orthodox are working so admirably and we rest? Why is it that we remain inactive? Why can't we work for the glory of God and the conversion of those who are in the dark? No, Mr. Principal, I don't wish to become a bishop. I rather wish to preach Christ among the savages and the faithless . . . Let others become bishops.<sup>5</sup>

However, it seems that there was no immediate response to Ambrazis' invitation for support of missionary activity in the period immediately following the publication of his book. It was not republished in his lifetime. When after the Second World War it saw the light of day again, it was in a serialized form in a children's magazine.<sup>6</sup> It was not until 1967 that it was republished as a book.<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless, the book may well have entered the subconscious mind and heart of its young readers, preparing the ground for a resurgence of missionary interest among the Greek Orthodox in the period following the Second World War and its aftermath fifty years later.

### *The Story*

A synopsis of a novel can never do justice to its tone or movement and will, hopefully, be nothing more than a provocation to read the book itself. Nonetheless, for purposes of this presentation, it is necessary for us to familiarize ourselves with the story so that the points that follow concerning the principles and methods of mission

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. pp. 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Boulgarakis, *Porefsthendes*, p. 63.

<sup>7</sup> Published by Soterios N. Schoinas, in Volos, Greece.

may be understood.<sup>8</sup>

Ambrazis presents the story to his readers in the form of a letter written to him by Philotheos, written essentially in the first person, and which he divides into seventeen chapters for the convenience of his readers. As we have seen, Philotheos had refused his diploma, because receiving it required his ordination. He does this so that he can become a lay missionary. As he left the island of Chalke, he made friends with a priest named Benedict, who had already heard of the audacious Philotheos' desire to become a missionary. It just so happens that the Father Benedict had been assigned to serve the Greek Orthodox community in Calcutta, India. He offered to take Philotheos with him on the journey. So begins a series of *deus ex machina* events which pepper the story, providing it at once with a measure of the fantastic, and of a delight at the unexpected, and more than a small amount of trust in divine Providence for the reader.

Of course, the ship on which they were travelling sank in a violent storm, and a few of the survivors were thrown upon a small island. Awakening on the beach, they faced a fearsome sight: bones and skeletons everywhere! The local natives were cannibals, who proceeded to kill, cook, and eat the hapless survivors. Finally, Philotheos' turn came. He was approached by the tall leader of the tribe, but who, instead of killing him, suddenly pointed to our hero, and called to his fellows to fall to their knees before Philotheos in an act of awesome reverence, shouting, "Taboo, Taboo!" as they did so. It turns out that a fairly large birthmark on Philotheos' face provoked them to think of him as some kind of god, perhaps the author is here imitating and embellishing a somewhat similar experience of Saint Paul as described in chapter 14 of the book of Acts.

Philotheos saw in this turn of events God's answer to his prayer that he become a missionary. He decided to evangelize the natives. Following the burial of the dead, on the basis of the newly found authority, Philotheos ordered a small hut to be built in the branches of a large tree. He then separated himself from the Nianiaoomi people, for that is their tribal name. He took his meals alone in his hut. Conveniently, he had managed to save from the storm, his Bible, some medical supplies, and a small pistol with ammunition.

His first missionary encounter resulted in the healing of the mother

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<sup>8</sup>I am here greatly helped by the summary done by Boulgarakis in his Greek article.

of the tribal leader, whose name he came to learn was Birbiroo. The quinine in his sack was administered, but the reaction of the patient was so powerful that Birboroo threatened the life of the missionary. Philotheos slightly wounded his attacker with his pistol and thoroughly frightened everybody else. This "thunder" at Philotheos' control and the fact that Birbiroo's mother rapidly regained her health, assured him subsequently of the loyal support of the tribal leader and his people.

His first missionary task was to learn the language of the Nianiaoomi. With Birbiroo's help he mastered its simple vocabulary and grammar. Concurrently he began imposing a measure of civilization upon the tribe, in the form of personal cleanliness, cooking of food over fire, and the physical and social organization of the living conditions of the tribe. He left untouched for the moment the religious traditions of the Nianiaoomi, as well as the great idol which was at their center. Further civilizing practices were introduced, including planned work details, food gathering, pottery making, hemp-weaving, clothes making (and wearing!), the construction of a sun clock and a calendar. Finally, the language of the Nianiaoomi was committed to writing.

Forming teams of teachers, the people of the tribe were soon taught to read their own language. In the meantime, Philotheos began translating the New Testament into the new language, and the more intelligent of the Nianiaoomi began copying the Scriptures for their fellows.

One day this peaceful activity was disrupted by an attack by a neighboring tribe, the Gouanachi, the traditional enemies of the Nianiaoomi. Philotheos used his pistol again and gained the awesome fear of the enemy and in the process a bullet struck the idol of the Nianiaoomi, knocking it down. Among those captured were two white men who, previously, had been captured by the Gouanachi. One of them was a French Calvinist missionary named Gabriel; the other, an English Evangelical Christian by the name of Archibald. At Philotheos' suggestion they agreed to work for the evangelization of the Nianiaoomi and, since Philotheos was there first, to do so in accordance with the Orthodox faith and traditions. However, Philotheos did so only after he is convinced that their basic Christian beliefs were Orthodox. Gabriel and Archibald learned the language and co-operated in the translation of the New Testament.

Following prayer and fasting, on the 22nd of May in the year 1875, the missionaries began the catechetical instruction of the natives. The dramatic confrontation about the fallen idol, the call for repentance

and the heartfelt response to it, the presentation of the saving forgiveness of Christ made by Philotheos was followed by explanations of the plan of salvation by Gabriel, and about the Church by Archibald.

So eager was the response of the Nianiaoomi that the missionaries decided to teach them on a daily basis from the translated New Testament. It was then that Philotheos instructed the people about the daily cycle of prayers and led the whole community in them each day. After several weeks of instruction, the Nianiaoomi were tested in their knowledge of the faith and in their commitment to Christ. They were found worthy by the missionaries, and the question of baptism arose.

There was a dilemma for Philotheos. He was the Orthodox Christian, but a layman. Gabriel and Archibald were ministers, but not Orthodox. What to do? Who shall baptize the Nianiaoomi? Philotheos decided that he should do the baptizing, but postponed the baptism for the time being.

One day shortly thereafter a storm arose. On the horizon the small community saw a storm-tossed ship which eventually sank. Some survivors approached the island and the populous swam out to them to save them and some of their belongings. The older of the two men had a long white beard and hair knotted at the back! Yes, you guessed it! The old man was a Greek Orthodox bishop, on his way to Calcutta; the young man was his deacon, and the luggage which was saved included vestments and everything needed for Orthodox worship!

The next day was a glorious one for Orthodoxy! The bishop conducted the Liturgy, Gabriel and Archibald converted to the True Faith, and the Nianiaoomi were baptized and anointed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. That night, for the first time the natives and the white missionaries shared a common table together, feasting in celebration of the day's events.

The subsequent weeks were spent in organizing the newly found church. Birbiroo was ordained a deacon and then a priest. The Greek deacon, Gabriel, and Archibald translated the Orthodox *Book of Services* (the *Euchologion*), and the bishop conducted the sacrament of holy Matrimony for all of the married couples in the tribe.

It was now time for the missionaries to leave. A ship appeared to take them back to civilization, but before they departed the bishop spoke to the now Christianized Nianiaoomi, providing them, like another Saint Paul in Ephesos, with counsel and advice on the living of their Christian life. The ship left the missionaries off in Australia



where Philotheos stayed to write the story of his missionary experience. One of the purposes of writing the story — he wrote — was to raise money for the Nianiaoomi mission. Subsequently, Philotheos communicated with Father Birbiroo and learned that all was well at the mission. The story closed with the expression of the desire of missionary Philotheos to visit the mission once again, and from there, to finally return to his homeland, Greece.

The broad outlines of the story as just described do not communicate the flavor and the vivacity of this simple text. There is a delightfulness about it, even in the appearance of ready solutions to seemingly insurmountable problems. Yet, in spite of the inherent *naïveté* of the narrative, it includes much significant material for the study of missions from the perspective of the Eastern Orthodox tradition. It is to this task that we now turn.

### *The Mission Theory*

The theory of mission which arose in the early Byzantine Church crystallized into a number of dominant perspectives. These are: the goal of establishing worshipping communities of believers, the use of local culture and tradition wherever possible, the translation of the Bible and the church services into the language of the people, the ordination of clergy from among the converted peoples, the use of missionary methods appropriate to the Christian faith, and the eventual making of the mission church into a self-governing, or “autocephalous” church.

In Orthodox mission history, exceptions to this mission theory can be found many times. In Russian missions, such errors led in the early 1800s to massive apostasies to Islam. Yet even the evaluation of those missions established contrary to the Eastern missionary ideal consistently took place in accordance to these principles.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand, those missionary efforts which are presented as examples of the best missionary activity in Orthodoxy, consistently display them. Thus, the examples in Russian missionary history referred to in the novel, especially the Japanese mission of Nicholas Kasatkin, exemplify these principles concretely. Another is the mission to the Kalmucks of the Altai plateau in Central Asia by Makary

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<sup>9</sup> For a detailed discussion of these principles, see James John Stamoolis, *Eastern Orthodox Mission Theology Today* (Maryknoll, NY, 1986), chapters 7 and 8.

Glukarev; and another, the exemplary mission work of John Veniaminov among the Aleuts in Alaska. These missionaries and their methods are models for the Orthodox in the application of the traditional Orthodox Christian mission principles of which we speak.<sup>10</sup>

Singly and as a whole, these principles have stood the test of time, and in most cases have served to establish long-standing and viable Christian communities. As principles they presuppose the truth of synergy, i.e., that it is "God who gives the growth" (1 Cor 3.6) in the first instance, but that human beings must cooperate with the divine will. The missionary principles of which we speak are addressed to the human side of the synergistic equation. They can be listed in a propositional form in the following manner.

1. The goal of Orthodox missions is the establishment of new believing and worshiping communities, that is, the establishment of local churches made up of believing, practicing and growing Christians. Unlike much of contemporary mission theory which argues for a mission goal which is cast in economic or political terms, in Orthodox mission theory these interests are not ignored, but they do not form the central purpose of mission. The liturgical and sacramental emphasis in Orthodox mission thought clearly focuses the missionary effort in the worshiping community. "Hence, the worshiping community itself is an act of witness."<sup>11</sup>

2. The second principle of Eastern Orthodox missiology is the effort to incarnate the gospel message in the form, culture, tradition, and language of the people. The remarkable "culture making" and "nation building" tendencies of Eastern Christian mission work in the past is always noted. From the earliest of times barbarian tribes were attracted to Christianity in part because it was perceived as incorporating not only spiritual values but also culture and civilization. However, the critical difference between eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western mission theory and practice, and the Eastern ideal (which, we must remember, was not always heeded in practice), was that a larger respect for the autonomy of culture was accorded to the receiving peoples in the Eastern perspective. The

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<sup>10</sup>Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Baltimore, 1971), pp. 439-49.

<sup>11</sup>Metropolitan Chrysostomos Konstantinides of Myra, "New Orthodox Insights in Evangelism," in *Martyria and Mission: The Witness of the Orthodox Churches Today*, ed. Ion Bria (Geneva, 1980), p. 10.

fact, however, that this culture principle was in fact significantly practiced is found in the following two principles, that of the rapid translation of services and Scripture into the language of the people, and the rapid indigenization of the clergy.

3. The rapid translation of Scripture and services into the language of the people is a particular case of the previously mentioned general effort to incarnate the gospel message into the culture and life of a people. The creation of the Cyrillic alphabet is not an isolated example, but it is particularly striking because of the immediate and sharp contrast with the Latinizing approach of the German bishops with which Cyril and Methodios had to contend.

4. In like manner, the rapid indigenization of the local clergy is equally striking when compared to the tendency by both Roman Catholic and Protestant nineteenth-century missions to perpetuate the presence of the Western missionary among the newly Christianized peoples. The problem posited in Western missiology by means of the question, "When does a mission become a Church?" has not — at least up to some rather recent developments — needed attention in Eastern Orthodox missiology. Much of the turmoil in contemporary Western Christian missiology can be directly traced to the rejection by the mission fields of a perceived Western ecclesial and cultural imperialism.

Rapid indigenization of the clergy is also another way by which the internal autonomy and integrity of the local church is encouraged and affirmed. Wherever in Orthodoxy the hierarchy and clergy are of different nationality than the laity, there continues to be friction and the sense of the impropriety of such a situation. It is a back-handed affirmation of the principle of the cultural incarnation of the Gospel.

5. Another, less widely recognized principle is the view that mission should be conducted on the basis of the most appropriate and fitting means. It is generally recognized when only numbers are being sought after, and persons are enticed into the faith through material promises or rewards, or by force against their wills, as was the case of the mission of Filofey Leschinski in West Siberia and that of Nicodim Lenkeevick among the Kalmucks, no permanent results can be expected.<sup>12</sup> The successful mission among the same Kalmucks by Glukarev, who emphasized catechetical instruction and

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<sup>12</sup>Stephen Neill, *A History*, pp. 214-15.

sincere faith, and who built more villages, schools, and hospitals than churches, is a vivid contrasting example of faithfulness to Orthodox mission principles.

6. To these, finally, I wish to add the principle of eventual autocephaly, through the possible steps of autonomy and semi-autonomy within the Orthodox canonical structure. Needless to say this development is an occasion for numerous situations of conflict and is especially difficult to resolve in particular cases. Yet, there is a commonly understood presupposition in Eastern Orthodoxy that foreign mission ideally will result in an autocephalous, that is, self-governing Church, provided that the necessary conditions are met as a presupposition. That both the conferring of autonomy and autocephaly are agreed-upon topics for the forthcoming Great and Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church witnesses to the viability of the principle and the continuing recognition of its appropriateness.<sup>13</sup> Properly, a mature Orthodox Church will be characterized by a mission consciousness, with a missionary program of its own, and with missionaries of its own.

Nevertheless, there is another side of this principle which is implicit: that there will be a time period of longer or shorter duration in which the new church is maturing and growing, requiring supervision of the new church by the mother Church as a part of the process of maturation. Of course, in principle it is to be that kind of care which will encourage the local church to continue its road to its eventual self-governance, provided all the conditions are present.

In general, these missiological principles are shared by many Eastern and Western missiologists today, though, of course, emphases and accents vary. This brief and cursory overview of Orthodox missiological principles may best be ended with the summary statement of a non-Orthodox scholar's assessment of Orthodox missiology, especially in relation to Western missiological approaches. He affirms

... the existence of a reasonably complete Orthodox missiology. There are avenues of thought that need to be developed further, but the main points of mission theology are all represented.

There are points of similarity between Orthodox missiology and Western missiology. However, this similarity must not be seen

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<sup>13</sup>See Stanley S. Harakas, *Something is Stirring in World Orthodoxy: An Introduction to the Forthcoming Great and Holy Council of the Orthodox Church* (Minneapolis, 1978).

as a copying of either East from West or West from East. Instead, the points of agreement stem from a common biblical base.

Furthermore, . . . Orthodox missiology sheds unique light on certain areas which are either not covered or or not given serious consideration by Western theologians.<sup>14</sup>

What remains in this section is to identify if Ambrazis has built these principles into his mission story. It clearly does not require much analysis to identify them in the story-line of the Philotheos mission. Ambrazis presents Philotheos as seeing his mission to the Nianiaoomi as a gift from God, presented to him as a result of his prayer to be a missionary by means of the shipwreck. His understanding of the goal of his mission is to establish a believing and worshipping and living Orthodox community. One of his earliest tasks is to learn the Nianiaoomi language, to translate the Scriptures into it, and initially, to translate some of the basic prayers for worship. When it becomes clear that the church will be established, the prayer-book and the sacraments of the Church are also committed to the language of the Nianiaoomi. The ordination of Birbiroo certainly telescopes dramatically the process of the formation of indigenous clergy, but it is important that this is included in the novel.

The issue of the appropriate and fitting means of mission work is perhaps the most troubling aspect of the novel. It may be here that significant nineteenth-century prejudices are at work. The immediate interest in civilizing the Nianiaoomi, in itself, is not suspect, since only the most elementary health and hygiene practices and some basic issues of morality are instituted by our missionary. We do not see an essentially imperialistic attitude in them. However, it can be argued that Philotheos' unwillingness to eat with the natives, his separation from them by means of his living arrangements, and many of the expressions used throughout the book betray an unacceptable attitude of racism, with its implied sense of superiority of the white European. Certainly, if such is the case, then it is an inappropriate element in this mission novel. Another issue which arises is the question of the appropriateness of the use of the firearm and the exploitation of the superstitious fear and awe which it produced. In his

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<sup>14</sup>James John Stamoolis, *An Examination of Contemporary Eastern Orthodox Missiology*, thesis presented for the Degree of Doctor of Theology at the University of Stellenbosch, 1980, p. 181.

treatment of this issue, Boulgarakis defends Philotheos of these charges, interpreting them in terms of temporary but necessary means, which he later explains properly to the Nianiaoomi. Boulgarakis also opines that Philotheos must be absolved from the charge of racism, since following the baptism of the Nianiaoomi, he joins in the celebratory meal with them.

Like the almost too rapid ordination of Birbiroo, the road to self-government seems to be too quickly implemented in the novel. Yet, it serves to include the principle of the eventual self-determination of the local Orthodox church. In the same rather cursory manner, the continuing interest of the missionary in the church he has founded incorporates into the novel this important dimension of missionary concern. In spite of the obvious inadequacy of these actions in the novel, their presence is certainly to be appreciated, when possible alternative endings are contemplated. For instance, Ambrazis could have had Philotheos ordained the priest and remain the white European leader over the Nianiaoomi, keeping them in perpetual subjugation. This he did not do.

We are then led to conclude that Nicholas Ambrozis' novel embodies in a charming and entertaining way the fundamental principles of Eastern Orthodox mission.

### *The Lancaster Connection*

In my summary of the novel, I did not mention that once the Nianiaoomi Church had been established, they soon showed interest in the Christianization of their former enemies, the Gouanachi tribe. In one of his communications with Father Birbiroo, Philotheos learns that the Gouanachi have been evangelized by the Nianiaoomi, through one of their own tribal members, and have embraced the faith. The Nianiaoomi had now become missionaries themselves!

Unfortunately for Ambrazis, such was not to be the case among his own Greek Orthodox people. As we have seen, the response to his story was neither enthusiastic nor anywhere as immediate as that of the Nianiaoomi. Over a half century was to pass before Greek Orthodoxy was to interest itself in mission in any conspicuous way. It was Father Chrysostom Papasasantopoulos responding to the presence of Ugandan Orthodox students in Athens that provoked the interests of the Greeks in mission. He went to Africa to work there in 1959, giving the rest of his life to that mission. We do not know if Father Chrysostom had read Ambrazis' novel, but surely those who had read

it, either in its original edition or in its reprinting in the children's magazine, were prepared to respond in accordance with the missionary principles it promoted. Others were to follow in Greece, with the founding of organizations and periodicals such as *Porefthendes*, "The Greek Society of Orthodox Foreign Mission," formerly known as the "Friends of Uganda," and the "Protokletos' Mission Society of Patras," which publishes the mission journal *Fos Ethnon*, i.e. "Light of Nations."

All this leads to the "Lancaster Connection." It is generally acknowledged that as far as the interest in mission within the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America is concerned, the leading figure, from the very beginning of his ministry, was Father Alexander Veronis. Like Papasarrantopoulos, Father and Presbyteria Veronis had become interested in helping the African mission from their contacts at the University of Athens with the theological students from Uganda. The Veronises began their work in support of Ugandan missions in Lancaster, their first and only parish, through the organization and promotion of a "Lenten Self-Denial Program." It was received enthusiastically by the Annunciation parishioners, a fact which encouraged its subsequent expansion to other parishes though the district youth program, and eventually to the whole Archdiocese. Under the eventual patronage of His Eminence Archbishop Iakovos and the episcopal supervision of His Excellency, Metropolitan Silas, it became a part of the official program of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, now with headquarters in St. Augustine, Florida.

What is not widely known, however, is that Nicholas Ambrazis' novel, *The Greek Orthodox Missionary Philotheos* was published in English translation in 1948 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, fourteen years before Father Alexander and Presbyteria Pearl assumed their duties there. The translator was Angel D. Sederocanellis, long involved in Greek education in the New York area. The publisher was Father Nicholas Elias, who owned a press and published his own writings on it. It is interesting to note that in the dedication of the translation, it is evident that both men had been familiar with the book from its original edition. Sederocanellis wrote,

Having read this interesting and educational story about forty years ago, I always carried in my mind the possibility of its translation into English. Reverend Elias' noble decision to publish it

made my duty to translate it a pleasure and a source of satisfaction in the declining years of my life.

Included in this set of circumstances is the fact that the first person to ever teach a course in Orthodox Missions at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology was pastor in Lancaster from 1956 to 1961, where he read this novel in its English translation, it being included among the books in the parish collection.

I am suggesting that it may well be that the vigorous and enthusiastic response which the congregation of the Annunciation Church gave to Father Alexander's original appeal for missions giving has its roots in the little book which had been published there twenty years before. Its message lay dormant, until God was to send these special servants to evoke its missionary message once again from the hearts of its early readers. It was Lancaster's Greek Orthodox community which was called by God to begin a movement for Orthodox missions which has done much, and promises more in the future. And it was they, the parishioners of Annunciation Church in Lancaster, who in 1981 did what no other parish in the United States of America did: they founded "The Endowment Fund for Orthodox Missions," in honor of Father Alexander and Presbytera Pearl Veronis.

Maybe all this is a series of unrelated coincidence. On the other hand, there may be more to it. The truth of "synergy" teaches that God leads us to mission. It is, of course, an act of faith to believe that God has been provoking this renewed concern for mission among the Greek Orthodox. Yet, there seems to be evidence for that faith. It would appear that with inscrutable wisdom, God has brought together a simple and entertaining missionary novel, a Greek teacher and a parish priest with a printing press, Africans thirsting for Orthodox truth, a young priest and his presbytera seeking to encourage missions among the Greek Orthodox in America, a congregation whose minds were fertile ground for the practice of mission — so as to allow a "Lancaster Connection" to kindle a new commitment to Orthodox missions in the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America. In this it would seem, as in so many things, "we are co-workers with God," "*Theou gar esmen synergyoi*" (1 Cor 3.9).

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, I remind you of the title of this Inaugural Annual Lecture on Orthodox Missions sponsored by "The Endowment Fund



for Orthodox Missions” — “Philotheos Revisited: The Reawakening of the Orthodox Missionary Outlook.” Whatever it was that Nicholas Ambrazis thought he was doing when he wrote his little story, it appears that it has in fact served God’s purpose in contributing to the renewal of missionary interest among the Greek Orthodox people.

Almost a century ago, Ambrazis placed on the lips of his protagonist a reminder of the great commandment of the Lord that Christians be missionaries. I remind you of the exchange.

“All these (arguments regarding ordination) are good and holy aims,” said Philotheos, “but what of Christ’s commandment?”

“Which commandment?” the principal of the school inquired.

“The commandment, ‘Go ye and teach all nations’ (Mt 28.19),” answered Philotheos. “As long as even a single unbeliever lives on the earth, unaware of Christ and his holy Gospel, this commandment obligates all Christians to strive for their conversion. Why are the other churches working through their missions among the unbelievers? Who is to teach them? Who is to enlighten them? Who will fulfill the commandment of Christ to work for their salvation, unless we be the ones, who are called Christians.”

It may well be that as a result of the story of *The Greek Orthodox Missionary Philotheos* his questions are no longer fully appropriate, for the beginnings of an answer have been given in Greece, and yet, in America, through the “Lancaster Connection.”

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## Piety — Pietism: An Eastern Orthodox Perspective

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JOHN CHRYSAVGIS

TO UNDERTAKE A CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF THE PHENOMENON of pietism, whether historically or phenomenologically would be to repeat much of what has already been said by recent or past historians and theologians,<sup>1</sup> and it is not the purpose of this paper to do so. Nor, however, is it the intention of this paper to attempt a kind of demythologising as done by persons of the like of R. Bultmann, D. Bonhoeffer, and more recently of P. Tillich and Bishop J. Robinson. Much ink has been spent on the “deus ex machina” who satisfies the needs of the “homo religiosus,” and on the need to destroy traditional symbols of the contemporary ecclesiastical setting and pious way of life.<sup>2</sup>

The essay that follows, inasmuch as it is primarily designed to question and suggest, is not and should not be regarded as a definitive statement. It is written out of a consciousness troubled by the

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<sup>1</sup>There exists a rich bibliography on the historical origin and development of pietism, its various expressions and leading personalities: cf. the informative and systematic study by M. Schmidt, *Pietismus* (Berlin, 1972). The best description, with an objective criticism, in the English language may be found in L. Bouyer, *History of Christian Spirituality* (London, 1969), 3, pp. 169 ff. See also F. Stoeffler, *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (1965), pp. 180-246. Christos Yannaras has undertaken a stimulating study of the movement, with special reference to its expression in contemporary Greece, in several of his books, esp. in *The Freedom of Morality*, trans. E. Briere, (New York, 1984), pp. 119-36. Cf. also the much discussed work by J. A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London, 1963).

<sup>2</sup>Cf. also works by P. van Buren, H. Cox, L. Feuerbach, F. Gogarten, J. Macmurray, J. Macquarrie, R. Niebuhr, and G. Vahanian.

understanding — or rather the lack of such — in contemporary religious and anti-religious circles concerning the meaning and significance of piety. After a brief introductory sketch of pietistic attitudes and an attempt to outline the risks of pietism as variously expressed, attention will be focused on the proper and balanced concept of piety. The term “pietism” will therefore be used to describe the abuse of genuine “piety,” although this interpretation is not always justified in history.

It is the dissociation, the rift in unity between God and the world, religion and life, between heart and mind, heaven and earth, that is at question here. Much of what happened with the development of pietistic movements in the last centuries, with the manifold expressions of art and literature in the wake of Romanticism, built on and deepened this very dissociation.<sup>3</sup> Religion, restricted to mere regulations, was formally relegated to the fringes of life, instead of constituting its center and circumference. Furthermore, this marginalization is subsequently regarded as natural, normal: religion and Church became preoccupations of those religiously, or at most aesthetically, inclined. And pietism became the way of life for such persons.

### *Piety — Pietism*

Very frequently the term “piety” obscures rather than clarifies. It covers an entire spectrum of meanings, ranging from various spiritual experiences — whether interiorized conversions or exteriorized institutions. It is naturally dangerous to rationalize or even psychologize mystical experiences of any sort, but it is equally as dangerous to accept without challenge religious experience which is in actual fact a distortion of historical Christianity as expressed by the life of the primitive Church, the apostolic tradition and the church Fathers throughout the centuries. Piety is often wrongly confused with certain religious acts or feelings. The early Church, however, spoke in terms of a “sacramental” life rather than of an occurrence of several so-called Christian deeds or an achievement of some virtues. The Fathers speak of “life in Christ” and describe it as “spiritual union” or “marriage.” The life in God invests and “infests” the Christian

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<sup>3</sup>Cf. A. Louth, *Discerning the Mystery: An Essay on the Nature of Theology* (Oxford, 1983), esp. chapter 1.

in every aspect of his person and world.<sup>4</sup>

It is common for people to contrast certain experiences which are classified as religious or pious with other daily or secular happenings. What is it, however, that determines the religiosity of a certain feeling? Why is such an experience more sacred than others? If God is invisible and wholly Other, then how can one human experience be regarded more "divine" than another? If one confronts the wholly Other, then it no longer maintains its wholly otherness. "Raw piety," therefore, may in itself signify very little; it may not be so glamorous if it does not lead to and from the Church, if it does not derive meaning from within the Church.

No pious life can ever exhaust the fullness of life in God. The *Makarian Homilies*,<sup>5</sup> for instance, have much to say about religious experience to a point where they may be — and have been — misinterpreted. Yet they are careful to encourage the enthusiasts to move on, to understand that their enthusiasm is but a step in their spiritual journey. For Christianity may never be confined to one or even to an unlimited number of experiences; it is concerned primarily with the historical events of the Incarnation, the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, as well as their witness in concrete historical situations. Any pious experience always falls short of the aim or fact of Christianity. There can be no real experience of piety: if one knows that one is humble, then humility has surely evaded one. In fact, the Fathers underline the importance of experiencing evil, rather than good. For when one is aware of evil, then one may proceed to fight or transform this into good. It is only this constant struggle against evil and sin that one knows in this life. Any religious experience is essentially illustrative, not substantive: the fact or Person experienced in no way depends on our experiences. To adopt more scriptural language, piety exists for the truthful act of life in Christ, but truth does not exist

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<sup>4</sup>*The Life in Christ* is the title of a work by Saint Nicholas Kabasilas, a Byzantine lay theologian in the fourteenth century who was a great exponent of the sacramental and liturgical life of the Church. Similar notions, however, are found in the many writings of Saint John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople (d. 407), and even as early as the times of Saint Ignatios, bishop of Antioch (d. 107), who underlines the sacramental character of the Church.

<sup>5</sup>A collection of fifty spiritual homilies traditionally attributed to Makarios of Egypt (d. c. 300) but now considered to be the work of an author in Syria (late fourth or early fifth century).

for piety (cf. Mk 2.27). For example, even if one did not experience the love of God during an entire lifetime, this would not suffice to conclude that therefore God is not loving. Piety can neither exhaust nor eliminate doctrine. On the other hand, doctrine is not merely an interpretation of a pious experience or way of life. It is the expression or formulation of life in God through Christ.

Piety, of course, is not an autonomous phenomenon, independent of historical, religious and cultural situations. It is always experienced within prevailing currents or tendencies. Nevertheless, there exist underlying common features between the piety of a Roman Catholic, a Protestant and even an Orthodox, since pietism tends to equate, or rather minimalize and even obliterate, confessional differences. Fundamental dogmatic principles are disregarded in this equation of spirituality and piety with an individualistic and utilitarian ethic.

Perhaps it would not be too presumptuous to claim that religion is wrong, even heretical, when it is restricted to *individualistic* piety, to the edification of the inner person, to the autonomizing of virtue. Such an appropriation of salvation may only be a misappropriation. Salvation must always be understood as being primarily an act and fact of the Church, whose mode of existence transcends individualism and is founded on its trinitarian prototype. Man cannot be justified through virtuous or religious duties. The subjectivism of this individual religious feeling is surely not far removed from the "reborn Christian" attitude which, ultimately, runs the risk of undermining the sacramental perspective of true religion and of losing sight of the Church. A religious outlook in this sense may satisfy one's individual needs, and may even improve character and social behavior, but it may never transform death into life and resurrection. The Church, however, is far more than merely a well-organized institution of social or conventional usefulness. It is, above all, the way of repentance, transfiguration and resurrection — the way of personal communion with God.

### *The Ecclesial Dimension*

It is the Eucharist that holds us before, and holds before us, God himself in an act of loving communion with all that is created by him "ex nihilo et ex amore." The ultimate mystery of God, then, reflects the ultimate sacramentality of man created in the inexhaustible image and likeness of God. The liturgy, however, as the basic and supreme

act of piety is unfortunately rarely regarded as an end in itself — or the realization on earth of this eschatological “end” — but only as beneficial or useful inasmuch as it contributes to the piety of the subject. One, therefore, encounters a hard selfishness that characterizes this form of piety.

There appears, of course, to be a common acceptance that piety or religion should not be separated from life. This is true of many contemporary theological writings, at least in theory, as it is of the patristic tradition; it is also true of the liturgy of the Church, as it is of popular faithfulness. Nevertheless, in practice, this commitment is less effective, and there seems to be a division, even if unconscious or inconspicuous, between the various spheres of human life, of which religion and piety constitute but one sphere. There seems to be, at least in reality, a compromise with the “duality” of this fallen world, a separatism of man concerned more with himself than with God. The loss of the original unity as found in the patristic cosmic vision has tragic consequences. Prayer, for instance, becomes a means of achieving a certain sensation or emotion. Outside of this purpose, prayer is often regarded as meaningless. Divine services are also undermined in this way: they are seen to involve a movement of the heart, without which the member of the congregation feels that nothing has “happened.”

The liturgical act is regarded as incidental to individual piety, an aid or opportunity for self-edification, one among other religious duties. In this way, however, the Eucharist — as communion of Christ, as a transformation of the entire created world, material and spiritual, human and animal — is distorted, construed as a religious obligation, restricted to a soul-benefiting service. The Church, then, becomes a secular institution, having at most some psychological or emotional influence on people. Surely in this case the distinction is blurred between the truth of salvation and the illusion of heresy. Piety cannot be regarded otherwise than an ecclesial event. When it is seen as some individual moral achievement, then it is irrelevant to truth, and even heretical, inasmuch as it undermines and even denies the very essence of the Church, which is communal, ec-static, Trinitarian.

It is precisely in the liturgical gathering that the source and essence of the Church is to be found. From this flows spirituality, dogma, life, thought and tradition. Outside of the liturgy and the communion of the Church, all forms of piety cannot be considered expressions of the Spirit. They may be understood as humanitarianism,

philosophy, intellectualism, civilization. . . . They are, however, not part of the internal life and truth that characterize the Church. In more theological language we might say that all Christian anthropology is intrinsically linked with ecclesiology, otherwise it is deformed, unbalanced, falsified, heretical. Piety must be developed within the living community of the Church. There is a sense in which piety and the liturgy follow the same "way": the pious Christian is liturgical, and the liturgy is an act of the pious, an act of God's people. In the Church everything is closely linked together, interpenetrating, though "without confusion or division."

The early Christians lived their liturgy in their entire lives, and immersed their entire existence in the liturgy. In this way, their way of life, their piety was liturgical: their way of acting, behaving, breathing, walking, talking, eating . . . Every detail of their life was baptized in the Church. Their every movement betrayed communion: "By this all men shall know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13.35); "Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk 22.19). "The company of those who believed were of one heart and soul" (Acts 4.32). The mystery of the Church was celebrated in every moment and day of the first Christians.

### *The Measure of the Saint*

Piety, then, always conforms to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist confirms piety.<sup>6</sup> Every detail of one's life is a revelation of God, an Incarnation of the Word, an act of communion. Nothing is an end in itself; everything *is* for the love and for the sake of others. Life becomes self-emptying, and a new life begins in which God penetrates every minute detail of life. In this way, one becomes sensitive, vulnerable, caring. And at the same time, this weakness is all-powerful because it is pregnant with God. The same Spirit that fills the liturgy now defines human life, transforming every cell and every member of one's body to the Body and Blood of Christ.<sup>7</sup> Every thought, word and deed thereupon become a conception of the Word of God, an Incarnation of Christ. Nothing is false, nothing is pretentious. Piety is rendered truth, and what emerges is the saint — the person who has placed himself at the disposal of the Lord, abandoned himself to every human person in whom he sees but the Lord.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Irenaios, *Against Heresies* 4.83.3, PG 7:1028A.

<sup>7</sup>Cf. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymn* 15.



The saint is the one in whom piety is an essential act, a fundamental part, a way of life that is made his very own and that does not remain merely on the surface. Everything for the saint is grounded upon, environed, supported, permeated and nourished by him who is the way and life, the beginning and end, the origin and culmination. Any distinction between human and divine is resolved, communioned, at the level of the saint, or more precisely at the level of the saintly *life*, resolved not merely in a rational concept or an emotional experience but in act or a succession of acts. Ultimately, the only veritable experience of piety is the experience of human finitude, an awareness of the need for the Other. In this way, true piety, theology and spirituality, is saintliness, and in the world of sanctity, there is room for the entire world; for saintliness is all-embracing, all-inclusive, loving. The saint, however, has a different way of behavior, a different mode of existence.

“Here all the soul’s actions tend to coalesce into simply being, and this being, insofar as it is there and then acceptable to the conscience, comes more and more to be felt and considered as the simple effect of the one direct action of God alone.”<sup>8</sup>

Piety is a complete engagement of the entire human person, an engagement with the Object-Subject of pious faith. It is never abstract or passive condescension to theoretical postulates. In the way of piety — just as in the ways of prayer and faith — God is known and not simply felt; “that which was from the beginning . . . [is actually] heard, seen with the eyes, looked upon, touched by the hands” (1 Jn 1.1). This fundamental principle of Orthodox Christianity is confirmed by the apostles, the martyrs, the confessors, the ascetics, the church Fathers and in the very life of the Church wherein, for example, the liturgy (the Greek term signifies “the act of the people”) is something that really happens, and not simply a meditation or a feeling. “If you are a theologian,” says Evagrius of Pontus (d. 399), “you pray truly; and if you pray truly, you are a theologian.”<sup>9</sup> In piety as well as in prayer, all human elements concur in a spontaneous action including the whole man: not only intellect, but will, emotions and even body. Naturally all elements — intellectual, affective and appetitive — *are* present, and there are times when one or the other

<sup>8</sup>F. von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion* (2nd ed. London, 1923), I, p. 369.

<sup>9</sup>*Περὶ προσευχῆς λόγος*, 60, PG 79.1180B.

may prevail. Yet, while distinguished, they are never to be separated.

### *Conclusion*

It is the saint, then, who brings together all the threads of Christian life, weaving them into a unique fabric that holds together spirituality and theology, heaven and earth, created and uncreated, all in the unsuspecting and natural simplicity of his piety.

In conclusion, I would like to offer the most dissecting description of a saint that I have come across:

He literally overflows. That is an expression which gives some idea of the truth about him. He has a treasure of inexpressible joy hidden in an earthen vessel, small and fragile. And this joy overflows and spreads all around him, filling his surroundings with its fragrance. Light shines from his being. His inner rejoicing sometimes goes beyond his endurance, breaks his heart, shows itself in tears and cries and gestures. And whether he speaks or whether he is silent, whether he sleeps or whether he is awake, whether he is present or whether he is absent, it is always the same thing that he says, the same thing that he is, the same grace and the same power. His presence or the memory of him, the feeling that he is near, or simply that he exists, of itself conveys something other, something uncreated, tranquil, penetrating. It is something which renews man, calms his nerves, extinguishes his anger, enlightens his mind, gives wings to his hope and prepares him for a struggle that gives quiet and peace to a whole people . . .

Now he moves untroubled in the midst of all things, in a way unlike that of other people. Everywhere he finds himself at home, since he has always burnt his own hut for the love of others. Wherever he places his foot he finds a rock, because everywhere he has humbled himself and let the other pass over him. In all his words he speaks clearly, he finds the image that he desires, because he has never mocked anyone, has wounded no one, and never hurt any creature. He has assuaged the pain of the whole world.

Thus his voice is broken, his breath cut short, his hands and feet tremble. And yet despite that he stands firm. He advances

unswervingly. He moves without obstruction. He sees, he goes forward, he loves. He is free, a man of the age to come. For this reason he alone speaks justly of this present age. Unnoticed by "those who seem to be pillars" (Gal, 2.19), he observes everyone and everything . . .

He is nature and holiness, perfect man and perfect god by grace. He does nothing which is false. He does not make things, he causes things to be begotten and to proceed. He does not speak, he acts. He does not comment, he simply loves.

His thoughts are action, his words creation. His absence fills all things (by grace). His presence makes space for all men (by grace). He has a different conception of life, of the world, of distances.

He does not exist in the world, and yet at the same time he recapitulates it, gives it form and structure. In the words of the troparion to Saint Anthony of Egypt, "By thy prayers, thou hast made firm the inhabited earth."

He has gone out of the realm of our habitual reactions. If you strike him, your blows will not reach him; he is beyond them. If you seek him, wherever you are, you will find him beside you. He lives only for you.

His image, his life, his voice, his conception of the world emerge at every moment. And this just because his life is constantly hidden, his body lost, his existence spiritualized; his flesh gains a radiant transparency and acquires its true value . . .<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Archimandrite Vasileios, *Hymn of Entry*, trans. E. Briere (Crestwood, 1984), pp. 127-31.

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the righteous. Saint Peter Damascene had listed the first five; Saint Nikodemos the Hagiorite added the sixth. *Askesis*, spiritual endeavor or training, is necessary for achieving holiness and embraces bodily practices and mental practices. The physical practices include fasting, vigils, standing, prostrations, and silence, and the spiritual practices involve repentance, concentration, meditation, inner attention, and prayer. More than anything else, prayer is noted as drawing divine grace to man and uniting him with God. Dr. Cavarinos concludes the main body of his work with the statement that "In a word, from this union is born the *theosis* of man, which is longed for by all . . . and is the final end and purpose, God's foremost and highest goal" (p. 30).

*Repentance and Paths and Means to Holiness* provide eloquent testimony to the scriptural and patristic basis of the Orthodox Christian faith and Greek Orthodox theology. They also provide highly readable, highly competent, and highly authoritative presentations of some of the most fundamental aspects of Greek Orthodox religiosity.

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\*The original Greek book edition of 1980 was reviewed in *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 26, No. 3 (Fall 1981) 237-38. The reader is referred to this source for more details about the Cavarinos publication.

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*Questioning Back: The Overcoming of Metaphysics in Christian Tradition.* By Joseph Stephen O'Leary. A Seabury Book. Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985. Pp. 8 (unnumbered) + 225. \$19.95, cloth.

If the author of this book really believes that he has himself written in a language that will replace already traditionally accepted theological and philosophical language, he will be sadly disappointed. The language used in this book will be just as foreign to Orthodox readers as the language of Western metaphysics that Joseph O'Leary is so anxious to replace. But more than the language, it is the metaphysical thought and its impact on theology that the author would have us overcome for "Metaphysics has been normative for Western thinking for two and a half millenia, the governing logos of our culture, identical with the force of reason itself . . . Metaphysics has become questionable in a radical sense and the inadequacy of its procedures

and categorical oppositions (sc. spirit/matter, rational/irrational) can no longer be taken for granted (p. 1). It is O'Leary's self-appointed task to undertake "to articulate the 'unthought' counter-metaphysical element to be detected in all the great Christian theologies" (ibid.). In so doing, he tries to discern what deconstructionists like Heidegger and Derrida mean by the "overcoming of metaphysics" and how theology should appropriate their methods. He also indicates the texture of contemporary theological discourse and shows that its ability to do justice to the Word of God is still greatly impeded by the metaphysical presuppositions involved and argues that the overcoming of metaphysics in theology cannot be satisfactorily accomplished except in the form of a full-scale historical hermeneutic. (The language of faith must be purified and separated from the language of metaphysics.) Taking his cue from the deconstructive method of Derrida, O'Leary applies his efforts to Augustine's *Confessions*, and finally deals with the problematic of the goal of this destructive hermeneutic, now the equivalent of what previous thinkers called "the essence of Christianity." One of O'Leary's favorite expressions is "the '*onto-theo-logical*' pattern of metaphysical thinking, which seeks to locate being in a 'logical' way, as the ground or cause of beings, either in the sense of that which beings as such have in common (ontology) or that source of being which grounds the unity of beings as a whole" (p. 11).

*Questioning Back* is a concentrated attack on the power that metaphysics has had over theologians. Joseph O'Leary, in language that strains the core of language itself, sees and traces the opposition of faith to metaphysics which he describes as itself metaphysical, but he also sees a "faith" in our times that is antithetical to the traditional noetic emphasis that is molded by the classical opposition of faith and reason, orthodoxy and heresy, submission to dogma and speculative understanding. He sees emerging a "faith" more consonant with biblical models of trust in God and openness to God's saving intervention.

O'Leary does not believe that Christianity can ever be dehellensized. "The Greek Fathers," says O'Leary, "assumed a homology between Christian and philosophical truth whereby the whole of Greek intellectuality could be taken captive to the truth revealed in Christ" (p. 152). The Fathers identified the biblical God with the God of metaphysics and Jesus Christ (the Logos of John) with the Logos of Greek philosophy. Apophatic theology reflected a current of counter-metaphysical thrusts at points at which the autonomous vitality of

the Christian faith was threatened with absorption by metaphysics, but even apophaticism O'Leary sees as succumbing to metaphysical structures ("a continuation of the grounding movement of onto-theology").

In his extensive treatment of Augustine, O'Leary finds Augustine's God a metaphysical God and the living God of biblical revelation, with the former at the expense of the latter. Augustine articulates the interpretation of his experiences in ontological terms and "accommodates the truths of faith as best he can to the requirements of metaphysical reason by expanding the unifying notion of 'being' so as to embrace them comprehensively, locating all the data of Scripture on an ontotheological map" (p. 195). Faith becomes an epistemological and ontological principle for "seeing in an ineffable way that ineffable being" (*On the Trinity* 1.2.3).

Finally, the "essence of Christianity" is examined in terms of the question: "How can Christian identity be expressed realistically and convincingly today, in the clarity of a conscious assumption of its own historicity, and without any uncritical dependence on inherited representations?" (p. 204). The answer must be in the form of a declaration of faith. In this connection, O'Leary discusses the Creed in some detail and indicates that we have the experience of historical depth, while at the same time the expectation of finding in the Creed clues to the phenomenality of Christ on the basis of the metaphysical presuppositions of the patristic theologians and the expectation that the language of Scripture will be inadequate to the contemporary question of Christ. The result will be the necessity to make our language appropriate for the current concerns of faith. Thus, the Christian faith can become more responsive to issues of peace, justice, and freedom, and "must reshape the meaning of tradition in accord with them, in a counter-metaphysical reading which frees faith from the morose, introspective provincialism characteristic of the metaphysical theology which is still dominant" (p. 225).

*Questioning Back* demands a great deal of exegesis and "questioning back" itself. It is a difficult book that poses difficult questions and proposes difficult answers.

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## Saint John Chrysostom: On Materialism and Christian Virtue

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GEORGE S. BEBIS

SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM IS A GREAT FATHER AND PREACHER of the Church. He was a profound exponent of Scriptures, the most eloquent preacher of all time. This earnest and sincere teacher of Christian morals was an adamant and most fearless believer in our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is, indeed, with great humility and deep fear of God, that I come to you today to speak about this holy man, whose life has been totally immersed in the Spirit of God, completely dedicated to the Christian Church, wholeheartedly devoted to a true transfiguration of this world and to the ultimate goal of human existence — to victory, joy, and theosis.

John Chrysostom is a hero in the true sense of the term; thus, he is able to inspire us with his intellectual genius, as well as his superb moral character, his strong boldness of purpose, and the burning flame of his true piety. His glowing personality has inspired generation upon generation, and his genuine ecclesiastical spirit (*phronema*) has indeed become the example *par excellance* to follow for true churchmen, priests, and theologians.

I agree with Philip Schaff who states that Saint John Chrysostom excelled in “the fulness of Scripture knowledge, the intense earnestness, the fruitfulness of illustration and application, the variation of topics, the command of language, the elegance and rhythmic flow

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\*An adaptation of the homily given at Vespers for the celebration of the Feast of the Three Hierarchs and Greek Letters Day at Holy Cross Chapel.

of his Greek style, the dramatic vivacity, the quickness and ingenuity of his turns, and the magnetism of sympathy with his hearers . . . ”<sup>1</sup> But beyond this eloquent description of Saint John Chrysostom’s virtues, I am compelled to say that Saint John Chrysostom was great because he was both human and holy. He was “a man of his time and for all times”;<sup>2</sup> a man of the world, but he overcame the world and became the harp, the instrument, the mouth — the fervent witness of the Holy Spirit.

I can imagine what he would have said if he were alive today. I can see how his fierce tongue, his sparkling eyes, his piercing voice, and his angry pen would have protested upon seeing the same materialistic spirit of today, as well as the same secular approach towards life, the same yearning for material success, and the same idolocratic admiration given to greed, self-interest, and self-centeredness.

A few weeks ago, in a prestigious newspaper, a journalist of national fame wrote a very strange article under the title “An Ode to Greed.” The subtitle was “Time for Delisting from the ‘Seven Deadly Sins.’ ”<sup>3</sup> The seven deadly sins listed by Saint Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome, in the year 600 were anger, envy, lust, gluttony, pride, envy, and greed. The newspaperman strongly suggests that the last one should be removed from the famous list. Our author writes that greed is hunger for more, “but only a hearty welcome to the demands of the truly greedy can insure ample supply for truly needy.”<sup>4</sup> Finally, the same author appears to suggest that pride should also be removed from the old-fashioned list of the seven “deadly sins.” This is the spirit of the world today. It is comprised of greed, success, and “the profit motive.” This is the “best engine of betterment to man.”<sup>5</sup> The conclusion is that without greed there is no generosity.<sup>6</sup>

The biblical and patristic approach is completely different. Worldly things are alien to the basic Christian precepts of godliness, virtue, and piety. The Lord himself taught us that he “is not of this world”

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<sup>1</sup> See *The Writings of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series (Grand Rapids, 1956) 9, p. 22

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *The New York Times*, Sunday, January 5, 1986, p. E-19.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

(Jn 8.23, 17.14), that there is another "prince of this world" (Jn 12.31), that he himself "has conquered the world" (Jn 16.33), and "that his kingdom does not belong to this world" (Jn 18.36). Saint Paul speaks repeatedly about "the spirit" or the "wisdom" of this world (1 Cor 2.12, 3.19). The exhortation of Saint John the Evangelist is so pertinent: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the glamour of life, is not of the Father but is of this world. And the world and the lust of it passes away, but he who does the will of God abides forever" (1 Jn 2.15-17). Also in agreement with this teaching is the extremely well-known parable of our Lord concerning the rich man and poor Lazarus as recorded by Saint Luke (16.19-31). Here, we are told of all "the good things" of this world which fell upon the rich man and all the "bad things" which fell upon poor Lazarus, as well as the consequences of their behavior and actions.

Thus, it is very clear that in the New Testament a line is drawn between the spirit and riches of this world and the spirit of Christ, the spirit of truth (Rom 8.19), the "Spirit of God" (1 Cor 7.40).

Saint John Chrysostom possessed a sharp, analytical mind, high morality, pure faith, and such stature that he could not but embrace totally and unquestionably this spirit of the Scriptures. Although he had the opportunity to enjoy all the pleasures of this world, from his youth he abandoned everything for the sake of Christ and his holy Church. We know that his commitment to monastic life and its strict rules was thorough and unfading. He wrote three long homilies against those who oppose monasticism, and he praised the sweetness and the calmness of the soul and the endless exuberance (*euphrosyne*)<sup>7</sup> of the monastic life. The monks are the true "Christ-bearing temples and heavenly athletes."<sup>8</sup> In one of his shortest yet most memorable homilies, he compared the life of a king with the life of a monk, and he came to the conclusion that the life of a monk is superior to that of a king; for whereas the king has to deal with the worldly affairs of this life day and night, the monk "decorates his life with the true worship of God and with prayers so as to live together with the angels and to talk with God

<sup>7</sup>"Against Those Who Oppose the Monastic Life," 2.10, *Ἐλληνες Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (Thessalonike, 1978) 28, p. 432.

<sup>8</sup>"Against Those Who Oppose the Monastic Life," *ibid.* 30.20, p. 589.

himself.”<sup>9</sup> He constantly reminds his readers that the simplicity of the monastic life guarantees health; carefree, quiet nights; and sound health to the monks.<sup>10</sup> “When you see,” he writes, “a master of wealth dressed with luxurious clothes, decorated with gold, and brought to and fro in vehicles and in splendid and pompous processions, do not envy him. However, when you see a monk, walking by himself, humbly and meekly, quietly and peacefully, become an imitator of his philosophy, and pray that you may become like him.”<sup>11</sup>

Chrysostom, however, also poses the question: Should all the inhabitants of the cities therefore desert them and go to live in the deserts and upon the peaks of mountains? He emphatically replies — not at all! Saint John Chrysostom is a practical man. What he really wants to convey is that worldly glory, wealth, luxury, and greed do not bring about happiness, fame, and fulfillment. It is most astonishing that in his second homily against those who oppose monasticism, he uses four examples from ancient Greece: Socrates, Plato, Diogenes, and Aristides as examples of humility, wisdom, poverty, and simplicity. Early Christianity and Greek paideia and ethos are truly married in this beautiful homily of Saint John Chrysostom.

As a man of such human dimensions, Saint John Chrysostom is fully aware of the biblical understanding of material things. The terms which he frequently uses are *cosmos* which is the world, as well as *cosmikos* which refers to worldly things and affairs. In his seventy-ninth homily on the Gospel of Saint John, he clearly expresses his feelings about this world or cosmos:

Let us, then, overcome the world; let us hasten to immortality; let us follow after our King; let us set up a trophy for him; let us despise the pleasures of the world. Moreover, there is no need of toils; let us transfer our soul to heaven, and the whole world has been conquered. If you do not desire it, it has been vanquished; if you ridicule it, it has been worsted.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> “*On Comparison of the Royal Power and the Life of the Monk*,” *ibid.* 30.3, p. 597.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* 30.3 and 4, p. 597ff.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 30.4, p. 607.

<sup>12</sup> *Homilies on Saint John*, Fathers of the Church, vol. 41 (Washington, D.C., 1960), pp. 359-60.

Again Saint Chrysostom speaks of the vanity and ephemeral character of this world, as well as the transient nature of our life. He frequently writes that "we are strangers and travelers."<sup>13</sup> We all live in a "strange and foreign land"; and therefore, nothing "in this alien country" should trouble us.<sup>14</sup> People, many times are like the running water "cold and weak and inconstant"; and they are attached to the passing things of this life, "never constant, always bearing us downhill precipitously. And this is so, because today a man is rich; tomorrow poor. Today he appears with a herald, and purse, and chariot, and many attendants; frequently, on the following day he has taken up his abode in a prison, forsaking to another, unwillingly, that show of grandeur."<sup>15</sup>

Besides the vanity and flux of voluptuous living, it also brings out all kinds of illnesses. "It strips off the strength of the body and sweeps away the virility of the soul." However, "... pain in the feet, and headaches, and blindness, and pains in the hands, and trembling and paralysis, and jaundice, lingering burning fevers, and many others in addition to these . . . are not from abstinence and a life of self-denial, but have been caused by gluttony and satiety."<sup>16</sup> Also there are "the diseases of the soul" as Saint John Chrysostom calls them, "greed, sloth, melancholy, laziness, licentiousness" which spring from a luxurious lifestyle.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, he proclaims the truth, which many medical doctors, physiologists, dieticians, and nutritionists speak about today: "Abstinence, in truth, as it is the mother of health, is also the mother of pleasure; and repletion as it is the source and the root of diseases, is also provocative of disgust . . . Therefore, not only should we find the poor more prudent and healthier than the rich, but even enjoying more happiness."<sup>18</sup> Additionally he many times speaks about the "glitter of this world," the "love of glory," and the people who "are busy with temporal affairs" who are in reality "citizens of this world" and who forget "the things of God" and "the things of

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid. p. 359.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid. p. 360.

<sup>15</sup>*Homilies on Saint John*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 33 (Washington, D.C., 1956), p. 219.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid. p. 220.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. p. 221.

heaven.”<sup>19</sup> We must never forget that this life is like staying “in a hotel or inn” (*pandocheion*),<sup>20</sup> that this life is a continuous struggle, that this is a life of mourning and sorrow, of askesis, hardships, fights and sweat. There is little comfort in this life. Both the pleasant as well as the sorrowful things are and must be indifferent to us. Hence they go away with such speed, so that they may not influence us forever. Thus he writes: “But the unseemly pleasures of this lie nowise differ from shadows and dreams; for before the deed of sin is completed, the conditions of pleasure are extinguished; and the punishment for these have no limit. And the sweetness lasts for a little while, but the pain is everlasting. Tell me, what is there that is stable in this world? Wealth which does not last even to the evening? Or glory? For as they dash away before they stand still, even so does this glory take to flight before it has fairly reached us.”<sup>21</sup>

Precisely because Saint John Chrysostom fully understands the temporal nature of earthly things, he spoke so strongly and so convincingly against the accumulation of wealth and the procurement of riches. He openly said that, “not to share one’s resources is robbery.” It is an astonishing statement, and Saint John Chrysostom knows this, but he brings all the necessary proofs and arguments from the Scriptures to prove his point. He uses three synonyms, *harpaxe*, *pleonexia*, and *aposteresis* in order to bring home his point that if one does not share with the needy, one is a thief.<sup>22</sup> We are all fellow-servants or σύνδουλοι, and we must share (μετεδίδειν) whatever we have with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Moreover, Chrysostom asks the most tempting and provocative question: “But what is the meaning of ‘mine’ and ‘not mine’? For truly, the more accurately I weigh these words, the more they seem to me to be but words . . .” “And not only in silver and gold, but

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<sup>19</sup>*Homily on Saint John*, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 39 (Washington, D.C., 1958), *ibid.* pp. 383-84.

<sup>20</sup>*On Eutropius, Patrician and Consul*, *Homily* 2.5. The Writings of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Church, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, 1956), p. 255.

<sup>21</sup>*An Exhortation to Theodore after His Fall*, Letter 2, *ibid.* p. 114.

<sup>22</sup>*Second Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man, On Wealth and Poverty*, trans. Catherine P. Roth (Crestwood, N.Y., 1984), p. 49. See also Charles Avila, *Ownership: Early Christian Teaching* (Maryknoll, N.Y., 1983), p. 83ff.

also in bathing places, gardens, buildings, 'mine' and 'not mine' you will perceive to be but meaningless words. For use is common to all . . . " Besides "God generously gives all things that are much more necessary than money, such as air, water, fire, sun — all such things . . . " All equally enjoy these gifts of God. Thus "mine" and "thine," these "chilly" words which introduce innumerable wars into the world should be eliminated from the holy Church. . . . The legal proprietors of worldly things or goods, "who seem to be owners or masters (δοκοῦντες αὐτῶν εἶναι κύριοι) — differ from those who are not even legally owners only by the fact that they have a greater responsibility to society."<sup>23</sup> He begs that those who possess worldly things not be possessed by these things; he states that the great inheritances of a few are unjust. The accumulation of wealth, most of the time, is acquired through sinful means. Saint Chrysostom has been charged with attacking the rich unjustly, but he knows better than that. In his famous homilies to Eutropios, he makes it very clear that he is against the corrupted character of the rich. He says:

For I am continually saying that I do not attack the character of the rich man, but of the rapacious. A rich man is one thing, a rapacious man is another: an affluent man is one thing, a covetous man is another. Make clear distinctions, and do not confuse things which are diverse. Art thou a rich man? I forbid thee not. Art thou a rapacious man? I denounce thee. Hast thou property of thy own? Enjoy it. Dost thou take the property of others? I will not hold my peace. Wouldest thou stone me for this? I am ready to shed by blood: only I forbid thy sin. I heed not hatred, I heed not war: one thing only do I heed, the advancement of my hearers. The rich are my children, and the poor also are my children: the same womb has travailed with both, both are the same offspring of the same travail-pangs. If then thou fastenest reproaches on the poor man does not suffer so much loss as the rich. For no great wrong is inflicted on the poor man, seeing that in his case the injury is confined to money; but in thy case the injury touches the soul. Let him who wills cast me off, let him who wills stone me: for plots of enemies are the pledges to me of crowns of victory, and the number of my rewards will be as

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<sup>23</sup>On *Virginity*, trans. Sally Rieger Shore, *Studies in Women and Religion* (New York and Toronto, 1983), p. 105. Cf. also Charles Avila, *Ownership*, pp. 85-86.

the number of my wounds.<sup>24</sup>

Saint John Chrysostom is ready to reply to the contemporary advocates of Social Darwinism who say that the poor are themselves the cause of their poverty because of their own wickedness and because God does not love them. He declares that this is contrary to the biblical understanding of God's love for all humankind, and it is a frivolous notion; and he further questions how they can call the rich and greedy fortunate because of their earthly belongings.

Let us not, therefore, call them fortunate because of what they have, but miserable of what will come, because of the dreadful courtroom, because of the inexorable judgment, because of the outer darkness which awaits them . . . no one will escape God's judgment, but all who live by fraud and theft will certainly draw upon themselves that immortal and endless penalty, just like this rich man (who faced poor Lazaros).<sup>25</sup>

We have seven sermons of Saint John Chrysostom on Lazaros and the rich man, and one realizes immediately his profound concern about the society in which he lives. The social chasm and discrepancy in Antioch was horrendous. A few wealthy people, living in the luxurious villas of the cities, controlled most of the wealth of the city; and in Constantinople, out of the one hundred thousand Christians, fifty thousand lived below the "safety net," to use a popular social term of our time. He knew from his excellent Greek humanitarian background and his excellent biblical foundations, that injustice and the monopoly of wealth in the hands of the few are contrary to the ultimate goal and destiny of man. Was he a socialist? Indeed, Saint John Chrysostom did not support or belong to any particular political or social system. He castigated both the rich as well as the poor who violated the commandments of God. A common error of politicians of all forms and colors is that they see the Church as a so-called sociological phenomenon;<sup>26</sup> whereas Saint Chrysostom saw the Church as a

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<sup>24</sup>*On Eutropius*, p. 254.

<sup>25</sup>*First Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man, On Wealth and Poverty*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>26</sup>Methodios G. F. Fouyas, *The Social Message of St. John Chrysostom* (Athens, 1968), p. 141.



divine organism, as the Ark of Noah, as the only place where ultimate salvation is secured for everybody regardless of social background. He saw human sufferings and human shortcomings through his sound biblical ecclesiology and eschatology. He often repeated the biblical "vanity of vanities, all is vanity." "This saying," he writes, "ought to be continually written on our walls, and garments, in the market place, and in the house, on the streets, and on the doors and entrances, and above all on the conscience of each one, and to be a perpetual theme for meditation."<sup>27</sup> He is interested in "faith (πίστις) and life (βίος) as found within the perimeters of the Christian Church."<sup>28</sup> Why? "For nothing is stronger than the Church. The Church is your hope, your salvation, your refuge . . ."<sup>29</sup>

In combatting materialism and greed however, Saint Chrysostom urges us to follow, within the ecclesiological setting and framework of salvation, the evangelical way of a virtuous life. He uses the beautiful Greek word ἀρετή, or virtue, which for the ancient Greeks included justice, bravery, and prudence. He incorporated it with the Christian understanding of love, humility, hope, and faith, and transformed and projected it to its eschatological vision and goal. Saint Chrysostom's theology, therefore, is not negative, but truly positive. He writes, "Let us not regard what is present, but consider what is to come. Let us examine not the outer garments, but the conscience of each person. Let us pursue the virtue and joy which come from righteous actions; and let us both, rich and poor, emulate Lazarus."<sup>30</sup> It has been observed by Professor Margaret Schatkin<sup>31</sup> that the divine Chrysostom uses the principle of Greek ethical theory to demonstrate that the Hellenic idea of virtue is realized only among Christians. Moreover, Christian virtue makes the Christian really "illustrious and distinguished."<sup>32</sup> He is so categorical about the practice of virtue, as he says, "for it is not possible to be saved by grace alone, but

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<sup>27</sup>On *Eutropius*, p. 249.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. p. 253.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid. p. 256.

<sup>30</sup>*First Sermon on Lazarus and the Rich Man, On Wealth and Poverty*, p. 37.

<sup>31</sup>*Saint Chrysostom, Apologist*, trans. Margaret A. Schatkin and Paul W. Harkins (Washington, D.C., 1983) p. 42.

<sup>32</sup>*Concerning the Statues*, Homily 4, *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, 9, p. 365.

there is need of faith, and after faith, of virtue.”<sup>33</sup> He also notes:

But if the noun “man” furnishes such an exhortation to virtue, does not the word “faithful” give a much greater one? You are called “faithful” both because you believe in God and have as a trust from him justification, sanctity, purity of soul, filial adoption, and the kingdom of heaven. God has entrusted and given these over to your keeping; you, on the other hand, have given over and entrusted other things to him: almsgiving, prayers, temperance, and every other virtue.<sup>34</sup>

On another occasion, he again speaks about the importance of Christian virtues, especially for women, who must adorn themselves “with modesty, piety, almsgiving, benevolence, love, kindness . . . reasonableness, mildness, and forbearance. These are the pigments of virtue . . . ” Moreover, “the summit of virtue” is nothing else but “holiness” which leads us “to those ineffable blessings that are dispensed to those who love him.”<sup>35</sup> These are the personal and the public virtues, the foundations of Christian virtues on interpersonal relations with God our Father and with our brothers and sisters in Christ. How much we need these virtues today . . . how much indeed! Saint John Chrysostom, the “Prophet of Charity,” to use the expression of Father Florovsky, leads the way for us.<sup>36</sup> What Saint John Chrysostom really asked from us is that faith, charity, belief, and practice be organically linked together in the Christian way of life. We cannot claim or reject either of them.

Today we celebrate Three Hierarchs Day, which is dedicated to Greek letters and Greek paideia. Our Fathers, in the eleventh century, thought it appropriate to honor these three great hierarchs, for they combined excellent Greek education and fervent Christian commitment. Saint Basil the Great, Saint Gregory the Theologian, and

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<sup>33</sup>*Baptismal Instructions*, in *Ancient Christian Writers* trans. Paul W. Harkins (Westminster, MD.) p. 317. For the original text cf. also St. John Chrysostom, Homily on Psalm 44: Ἕλληνες Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας (Thessalonike, 1982) 6, p. 68.

<sup>34</sup>*Baptismal Instructions*, p. 174.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 117-18.

<sup>36</sup>Georges Florovsky, “St. John Chrysostom: The Prophet of Charity,” in *St. Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly*, 3 (1955) 37-42.

Saint John Chrysostom were a product of Hellenic culture, and they felt no fear in proclaiming it publically. When Julian the Apostate, with a special edict, forbade Christians to teach and to be taught Greek *paideia*, Saint Gregory the Theologian protested most vehemently.<sup>37</sup> All the Fathers, however, including Saint John Chrysostom, knew the deficiencies of pagan philosophy, and they stated it openly and publicly, but they did not reject their roots. In their writings they preserved whatever the Greek mind had produced that was beautiful and good. This is why Johannes Quasten speaks about Christianization of Hellenism.<sup>38</sup>

But what is more important is that above and beyond their family and their educational and spiritual background, they remained steadfast to the biblical message of Christ: love of God, and love of mankind. Christ penetrated them throughout their souls, minds, and bodies. They were truly Christocentric.

Let us conclude with a letter of Saint John Chrysostom which he wrote during one of his exiles to his friend and fellow bishop Kyriakos:

When I was driven from the city, I felt no anxiety, but said to myself: If the empress wishes to banish me, let her do so; the earth is the Lord's. If she wants to have me sawn in sunder, I have Isaiah for an example. If she wants me to be drowned in the ocean, I think of Jonah. If I am to be thrown into the fire, the three men in the furnace suffered the same. If cast before wild beasts, I remember Daniel in the lion's den. If she wants me to be stoned, I have before me Stephen, the first martyr. If she demands my head, let her do so; John the Baptist shines before me. Naked I came from my mother's womb, naked shall I leave this world. Paul reminds me, "If I still pleased men, I would not be the servant of Christ."<sup>39</sup>

May the prayers and the blessing of Saint John Chrysostom and all the Three Hierarchs be with us all always. Amen.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>*The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, 9, p. 14.

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cultivating a community spirit of Christian love and understanding among the member churches. The Orthodox Liturgy on August 15 is mentioned with respect, and one goes through the pages of this interesting volume with the feeling that serious work and reflection were completed in Stavanger in August, 1985.

From the list of the attendants, it appears that the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Orthodox autocephalous churches were well represented. From Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School of Theology, I will mention Dr. Kyriaki A. FitzGerald and from St. Vladimir's Seminary, the Reverend Thomas Hopko. We are most happy to see our venerable Ecumenical Patriarchate represented by excellent and experienced theologians such as Metropolitan Bartholomew of Philadelphia, Professor John Zizioulas (presently metropolitan of Pergamos) and the Reverend George Dragas.

It is true that the meeting at Stavanger dealt once more with the desire, hunger, and thirst for full unity among Christians. The participants acknowledge the hindrances existing in building up a common expression of the apostolic faith needed so badly in our own times and in our own days. But a prudent "explication" is still needed so that words become meaningful and theologically relevant to our theological quests for total unity and an unbounding love in Christ. To put it in the optimistic language of Emilio Castro, the General Secretary of WCC, "Let us believe that the ecumenical ship is sailing" (p. 63).

The recommendations for further work and the by-laws of the Faith and Order Commission complete this attractive and interesting volume, constructive, and helpful indeed for those who are involved in the present stage of the Ecumenical Movement.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*Science and Religion: A Critical Survey.* Holmes Rolston, III. New York: Random House, 1987. Pp. 358.

The author of the present book has impressive credentials in both theology as well as mathematics and physics. He presently teaches philosophy at Colorado State University. In an admiring and bold way, he deals with the critical dialogue and confrontation between science and religion. The book is full of technicalities and apparently has been written for a special audience. But the fact however that

he accepts from the very beginning the inadequacy of the sciences to answer the ultimate questions in our lives, and this void is complemented by religious interpretations, shows that the author stands on concrete religious grounds. He accepts that religion is the science of the spirit, where rationality suited for objects is inadequate (p. 31). God (if it exists) is incomparably greater than any routine scientific object, and revelation must be taken and accepted on the basis of sheer faith. He contrasts this with the hypothetical-deductive method, which is not always consistent, and he discusses how many scientific experiments may hide thoughts and errors and how many scientific theories are based on confirming and disconfirming observations. But the author bases and substantiates his own religious beliefs on a personal experiential way or on hazy existential theism. The kingdom of heaven is at hand on this earth, thus although the author is able to ascertain the instrumental capacities of the sciences, as well as their failures to construct "optimal human genotypes," his religious orientation leads him to believe that one finds room for God only within one's own personal life. Indeed religion offers the pearl of great price because it carries values, truths, and judgments. All this of course sounds convincing and reassuring. Religion is far beyond the secular sciences which cannot offer "truth-value" realities and messages. No theologian will disagree with this last conclusion, but one must wonder if the task of religion and theology is to contrast themselves to scientific formulae and models, and ask from religion a personal, only experiential motif of life. The God of the Old Testament and the New Testament is in history and above history; he is a reality who lives beyond us, and certainly also in us. The ultimate message of religion is soteriological. This is the message of the Scriptures and the Greek Fathers of the East whom Professor Rolston has not read. If he had read the Greek Fathers, he would have offered us a wholesome understanding of the Christian message, and he would have given us reassurance of the true redeeming Christian faith. Professor Rolston has a brilliant mind and his book will provoke a great interest among those who study the relationship of secular science and religion. In the next edition, I hope Professor Rolston would use the Greek Fathers. They will give him a balanced perspective on the "truth-value" of the holy Scriptures.

George S. Bebis

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## Second Nicaea: The Vision of the New Man and New Creation in the Orthodox Icon\*

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ROBERT M. ARIDA

CHRISTOLOGY STANDS AT THE VERY HEART OF THE ICON controversy. Spanning the eighth and ninth centuries the disputes surrounding the existence and veneration of the icon focused on the person of Jesus Christ. These disputes formed the basis for the development of the respective christologies of iconoclasm and Orthodoxy, each of which presented two opposing understandings of the relationships between the incarnation, human nature and the world. Too often scholars who speak favorably about Second Nicaea sum up the teaching of this synod by pointing to its linguistic contribution; its clarification of the distinction between the veneration (προσκύνησις) given to the icon and worship (λατρεία) which is directed only to God. Indeed, this clarification and refinement of theological terminology is an important intellectual contribution since it was a way for the Orthodox to refute the iconoclasts' accusation of idolatry.<sup>1</sup> Yet this linguistic distinction is but one important aspect of Nicaea's teaching

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\*The term 'new man' is not to be understood as an 'exclusive' term used to describe humanity. I have selected this term in order to focus as sharply as possible on the incarnate Christ who, as an historical person uniting divinity and humanity within himself, provides the model and therefore the vision of the new humanity and new creation.

<sup>1</sup>*Horos* of Second Nicaea, 377E. Texts of Nicaea have been taken from Daniel Sahas' *Icon and Logos: Sources in Eighth-Century Iconoclasm* (Toronto, 1986) which contain a complete translation of Session 6 and the *horos* of Second Nicaea. Reference numbers in this paper follow those given in Sahas' translation.



on the icon and its corresponding relationship to Christology and anthropology.

The basis for the existence of the icon is the person of Jesus Christ. Thus the link between Christology and anthropology can be made when the icon is understood as a statement attesting to the reality of the incarnation. The *horos* (definition) of Second Nicaea reads as follows:

In summary we preserve all the traditions of the Church, which for our sake have been decreed in written or unwritten form, without introducing an innovation. One of these traditions is the making of iconographic representations — being in accordance with the narrative of the proclamation of the Gospel — for the purpose of ascertaining the incarnation of God the Word, which was real, not imaginary, and for being of equal benefit to us as the gospel narrative. For those which point mutually to each other undoubtedly mutually signify each other.<sup>2</sup>

By witnessing to the incarnation, the icon presents in lines and color the God-man, Jesus Christ. This means that the icon not only verifies the historicity of Christ's incarnation but also infers the historical resurrection and ascension. As an historical person, as a *real* human being, Jesus the incarnate and resurrected Logos reveals himself as the model for the new humanity making available the divine life for all. Consequently, the icon of the incarnate and resurrected Logos provides a vision of the new humanity and new creation.

In its defense of the icon, Second Nicaea had to confront an iconoclastic Christology which was determined to minimize the deified humanity of Christ and the effects it had on history and creation. This 'anthropological minimalism' of the iconoclasts can be traced to Origen and his eschatology.<sup>3</sup> Unlike the Orthodox who sought to keep a balance between history and eschatology, the iconoclasts held to an Origenistic vision of the future which ultimately rendered history and the material creation meaningless. What resulted from the eschatological one-sidedness of the iconoclasts was a myopic vision of the incarnation. Their myopia limited their perception of the historical

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<sup>2</sup>2nd Nicaea, 377C.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Georges Florovsky's "The Iconoclastic Controversy," *Christianity and Culture* Vol. 2 of the Collected Works (Belmont, MA., 1974), pp. 101-20.

and saving acts of Christ. Ultimately, in fact, the iconoclasts were unwilling to accept Christ's historical humanity as the basis for the restoration of human nature. What the iconoclasts finally envisioned was an eschatology in which Christ himself would share an incorporeal existence with the saints.<sup>4</sup> Thus human nature and the rest of the material creation had no future. In other words, for the iconoclasts, what occurs in the future is not a consequence of the past.

Origenism continued to wield enormous influence in the development of theological thought even after the formal condemnation of its founder at the fifth ecumenical synod. Origenism equipped the iconoclasts with intellectual tools to develop a metaphysics in support of their arguments against those who depicted the historical deified humanity of Christ in lines and color. The well-known letter of Bishop Eusebios of Caesarea to Constantia Augusta, a sister of Emperor Constantine I, indicates how firmly planted and popular Origen's super-temporal and super-spatial eschatology was among certain Christians and how the Hellenism of Origen was an intellectual movement which the Orthodox would have to reckon with repeatedly (even to this day).

Briefly, the letter is a response to Constantia who had written to Eusebios requesting him to send her an image of Christ. Eusebios' initial reaction was one of complete astonishment since he could not quite understand why she wanted such an image. For an Origenist, such

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<sup>4</sup>Cf. Origen's *On First Principles*, trans. G. W. Butterworth (New York, 1966). Origen writes: "We are . . . led to believe that the end of all things will be incorporeal by the statement of our Savior, in which he says, 'That as I and Thou are one, so they also may be one in us.' For we ought to know what God is and what the Savior will be in the end, and how the likeness of the Father and the Son has been promised to the saints, so that as the Father and the Son are one in themselves, so, too, the saints may be one in them. For we must either suppose that the God of the universe is clothed with a body and enveloped with some sort of matter in the same way as we are with the flesh, in order that the likeness of God's life may in the end be brought to the level of the saints; or, if this view is unseemly . . . then we are compelled to accept one of two alternatives and either despair of ever attaining the likeness of God if we are destined always to have bodies, or else, if there is promised to us a blessedness of the same life that God has, then we must live in the same condition in which God lives [3.6,1].

On the meaninglessness of history in Origenism, see C. J. Scalise, "Allegorical Flights of Fancy — The Problem of Origen's Exegesis," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 32 (1987) 69-88.

a request was simply incomprehensible. In his response to Constantia, Eusebios writes that no depiction could be made of either the glorified or kenotic Christ since it was impossible to depict the divinity which had swallowed up and transformed all the humanity and therefore mortality of the God-man. For Eusebios any depiction of Christ would be a false image since it could only reveal Christ in a state of humiliation. Georges Florovsky, commenting on this letter writes:

[the] Eusebian argument is clear and obvious. Christians do not need any artificial image of Christ. They are not permitted to go back; they must look forward. Christ's 'historical' image, the 'form' of his humiliation, has already been superseded by his divine splendor, in which he now abides. This splendor cannot be seen or delineated, but, in due time, true Christians will be admitted into that glory of the age to come.<sup>5</sup>

Suffice it to say, the anthropological minimalists, Origen and subsequently the iconoclasts, perceived history and matter as meaningless, as something to escape. They understood Christ's *telos* and therefore humanity's *telos* to be an incorporeal and super-historical existence.

### *Iconoclasm and Demythology*

By tending towards an eschatology unrelated to history and by placing minimal emphasis on the humanity of Christ, iconoclasm set the stage for its so-called 'ethical theory' of the icon.<sup>6</sup> In some ways this theology resembles the 'ethical theory' formulated by pre-Bultmanian demythologizers. For the iconoclasts the 'ethical theory,' developed at their councils at Hieria (754) and at Hagia Sophia (Constantinople, 815) focused on the written word in both the holy Scriptures and hagiographies.<sup>7</sup> By concentrating on the written word, the iconoclasts defined a true image to be someone who imitated the

<sup>5</sup>Florovsky, "Iconoclastic Controversy," p. 109.

<sup>6</sup>See Milton V. Anastos, "The Ethical Theory of Images Formulated by the Iconoclasts in 754 and 815," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 8 (1954) 151-60.

<sup>7</sup>The "ethical theory" was an additional support to the iconoclasts gathered at Hieria who claimed the icon's existence and veneration signified a variety of heresies such as idolatry, Nestorianism, and Monophysitism.

actions of Christ and the saints.<sup>8</sup> Anathema 16 of Hiereia sums up the 'ethical theory':

If anyone endeavors to reinstate the effigies of the saints in inanimate and speechless icons made of material colors, which bring no benefit — for the idea (of the icon) is vain and an invention of diabolic cunning — and does not rather reproduce in himself their virtues through what has been written about them in books, (being) like animate icons, consequently to incite in himself the zeal to become like them, as our Fathers inspired by God have said, let him be anathema.<sup>9</sup>

For the Fathers of Second Nicaea, the 'ethical theory' joined with an origenistic denial of history nullified the reality and the purpose of Christ's incarnation. On the one hand, the 'ethical' Christianity of the iconoclasts defined holiness as 'imitating' a faceless and even docetic Christ. The imitation of Christ and the saints therefore precluded any notion of the interpenetration of natures, i.e. the participation of our humanity in Christ's deified humanity. On the other hand, the historical God-manhood of Christ is also effaced. Thus the revelatory and saving acts of the historical Jesus are forced to recede into the realm of myth and consequently are cut off from renewing and sanctifying humanity and all creation.

### *The Icon and Christ's Deified Humanity*

The Fathers of Second Nicaea understood the icon as a fundamental component of the Christian tradition. Like the written word, it revealed the relationship between Christology and anthropology in the context of history and eschatology. By maintaining these relationships, Second Nicaea rescued Christology from the demythologizing tendencies of the iconoclasts. By adhering to the teaching of Chalcedonian

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<sup>8</sup>Based on the Πεύσεις of Constantine V, the Synod of Hiereia also defined the eucharist as an authentic image (being the true ἀγαποποίητον) since it shared the same divine essence as its prototype. For a discussion on the doctrine and related sources pertaining to the eucharistic teaching of the iconoclasts, see Steven Gero, "The Eucharistic Doctrine of the Byzantine Iconoclasts and its Sources," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, 68 (1975) 4-22. See also Gero's *Byzantine Iconoclasm During the Reign of Constantine V* (Louvain, 1977), pp. 45-47.

<sup>9</sup>2nd Nicaea, 345D.

Christology — that the divine and human natures of Christ are united in one hypostasis (person) without confusion, without change, without division, and without separation — the Fathers of Second Nicaea had a theological platform on which to build their defense of the icon as a re-presentation of the deified humanity of Christ:

Even though the catholic Church depicts Christ in human form, she does not separate this from the divinity united with it. Rather, she believes that this is deified, as she confesses it to be with God, according to Gregory the Great, the Theologian [*Oration* 23, PG 35.1160C], and according to the truth . . . We confess the Lord's flesh to be deified, and we know the icon to be nothing else but an icon, signifying the imitation of the prototype.<sup>10</sup>

By taking on human nature and the sin of the world, Christ has opened the way for the deification of all humanity. That which was circumscribable (and mortal) was united to the uncircumscribable (and immortal) divine hypostasis.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, while the divinity of Christ was in no way diminished, his humanity — which was our humanity — is healed. This deified humanity of the historical Christ is the model and goal of our humanity. For this reason the icon of Christ is the icon of the New Man which offers the vision of the new creation. It is an eschatological statement of Christ's historical life and bears witness to a process of renewal and transfiguration which has been opened for all. Consequently, each icon of a saint, whether the subject is male or female, portrays a human person participating in Christ's deified humanity. Founded on the historical incarnation and revealing what has not yet been fully accomplished the icon discloses the true definition and *telos* of everyone (and everything).

### *The Icon and the Liturgy*

Revealed in the icon is the form and face of the Gospel's image of Christ. The icon is the product of transposing the gospel image of Christ in words into the gospel image of Christ in lines and colors. The context for this transposition is the liturgical worship of the Church, specifically the eucharist. In this context the language of words transposed into the language of images reveals the dialectic

<sup>10</sup>Ibid. 344A,B.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. 244B.

of eucharistic celebration, i.e. the new covenant as an historical and eschatological event.

For the Fathers of Second Nicaea the written (or spoken word) and the image confirmed and completed each other in a reciprocal relationship.

The representation of scenes in colors follows the narrative of the Gospel; and the narrative of the Gospel follows the narrative of the paintings. Both are good and honorable.<sup>12</sup>

They further developed this idea by stressing that word and image convey the same message.

We all, therefore, see and understand that the painting of icons is something that has been handed down to the Church before the holy councils, as well as after them, like the tradition of the Gospel. Thus, as when we receive the sound of the reading with our ears, we transmit it to our mind, so by looking with our eyes at the painted icon, we are enlightened in our mind. Through two things following each other, that is by reading and also by seeing the reproduction of the painting, we learn the same thing, that is, how to recall what has taken place. The operation of these two most basic senses is also found conjoined in the Song of Songs, where it says: "Show me thy face, and cause me to hear thy voice; for thy voice is sweet and thy countenance is beautiful" (Song 2.14). In agreement we say with the words of the psalms: "as we have heard, so we have also seen" [Ps 11.12].<sup>13</sup>

The icon, like the Gospel, transmits the language of the Church. Both the statements of the Gospel and the statements of the icon emerge from the Church's collective memory (ἀνάμνησις) kept alive in the Holy Spirit and retained in worship.<sup>14</sup> Thus iconography is an

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid. 269B.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. 221A; cf. 360E-361A.

<sup>14</sup>See the stimulating comments made by Boris Uspensky on the concept of ἀνάμνησις in his *The Semiotics of the Russian Icon*, ed. Stephen Rudy (Brussels, 1976), p. 21, n. 17. Also, for a presentation on the relationship between word and image, see Dumitry Staniloae, "Revelation Through Acts, Words and Images," in *Theology and the Church* (Crestwood, NY., 1980), especially pp. 112-30.

expression of the worshipping community and not an art form stemming solely from the imagination of the iconographer. Rather the iconographer has a priestly vocation to accurately transmit the proclamation of the Gospel through the language of art.

It is the collective memory of the Church contained in the celebration of the eucharist which draws past, present and future into one place and time. This synthesis of time in space is expressed in the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom where the saving acts of Christ are recounted prior to the consecration of the bread and wine:

Remembering (μνησθέντες), therefore, this command of the Savior and all that have come to pass for our sake: the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the enthronement at the right hand of the Father, and the second and glorious coming . . .

While the eucharistic 'remembrance' draws history and eschatology together it also leaves eschatology as something to be anticipated and fulfilled. The icon clearly reveals this paradox. Each figure and detail in an icon is recognizable as having a connection in history. Yet the iconographic form points to the existence of a person and his surroundings beyond the limits of time and space. What is seen is a statement of what was, what is, and what will be. The history and eschatology of the written word are translated into the language of the icon. The organization of space, the choice of colors, bodily gestures which defy anatomy, the wearing of clothing (and the way nudity is depicted), the placing and style of architecture, and the way plant and animal life are re-presented all combine to form a single composition which helps to keep the collective memory of the Church alive and new.

In the icon the viewer beholds the process of the 'old' becoming 'new.' What has been accomplished in Christ's deified humanity is what all of us are called to grow into for all eternity. In celebrating the 1200th anniversary of Second Nicaea people everywhere have the possibility of receiving the joyful hope which emanates from the face of Christ. For from this face of the New Man comes the revelation of our Father who, through his love, has removed all barriers between himself and creation and continuously invites his creation to participate in the banquet of new and everlasting life.

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## Second Nicaea (787-1987) Eucharist, Image, and Priesthood

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ANDREW J. SOPKO

TWO IMPORTANT RESULTS OF THE SEVENTH ECUMENICAL SYNOD at Nicaea in 787 were the reiteration of the reality of Christ's presence in the eucharist and the proclamation of the propriety of the visual representation of Christ in the icon. The iconoclasts' contention that the eucharist was the only permissible "image" of Christ was rejected as was their disavowal of any visual representation of him.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of one further relapse into iconoclasm in the council's aftermath, both eucharistic realism and the icon of Christ have remained central to the Orthodox tradition up to the present. In its liturgy, reception of the eucharist has meant a real participation in the body and blood of Christ, a "Christification." In this same liturgical context, the image of Christ is also found. With the victory over iconoclasm, the sanctuary partition (templon) evolved into an icon screen (iconostasis), with the image of Christ given the most prominent place at the threshold of the eucharistic table in the sanctuary.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See the contentions of the iconoclasts concerning the eucharist in the *horos*, of the Council of 754, in J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio* (Florence, 1759 ff) 13, 261d-264c. While the problem of the eucharist as "image" does not receive a specific mention in the *horos* of Second Nicaea, *ibid.* 373d-79a, it was refuted in the writings of iconodule theologians such as Nikephoros of Constantinople and Theodore the Studite, as will see below. The Fathers at Second Nicaea basically concerned themselves with the propriety of the icon of Christ and its veneration in their "definition."

<sup>2</sup>While there are a number of different terms which have been used for

While the presence of Christ in the eucharist as well as the presence of his icon concretely reiterate in the liturgy the distinction between reality and image, the character of the priest or presider in the same context is not so immediately apparent. Although there has been some discussion in the Orthodox tradition of the "iconic" character of Christian priesthood, this has been most recently used as an apologia for a strictly male priesthood.<sup>3</sup> Within the tradition established through Second Nicaea, the priest stands literally between the image of Christ on the icon screen and the reality of Christ upon the eucharistic table. Through an examination of the Orthodox eucharistic liturgy seen within the context of Second Nicaea, this paper will attempt to make a fresh contribution to the debate concerning the character of Christian priesthood.

The contextualization of the problem of the priest as "icon of Christ" within the eucharistic celebration and an attempt to offer a solution to this problem out of this context needs no justification in the Orthodox tradition. Because the Orthodox Church sees the liturgy as the source of its theology and the eucharistic liturgy itself as the proper setting for all other sacramental actions,<sup>4</sup> liturgical theology will inevitably help in assessing the propriety of the eucharistic celebrant as the icon of Christ. This emphasis on *context* does not mean to deny that a group of *proof-texts* is available from Ignatios onwards that equate the presider with Christ.<sup>5</sup> These patristic and canonical texts have already been entered into the arsenal of those who insist upon not only the iconic character of Christian

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the "barrier" between the nave and the sanctuary in Orthodox churches as it has evolved, these two have been chosen for the sake of simplicity and contrast. Here "templon" denotes a sanctuary partition with no icons on it while "iconostasis" signifies the addition of a number of icons to the partition.

<sup>3</sup>See particularly *Women and the Priesthood*, ed. T. Hopko (Crestwood, N.Y. 1983) and especially the articles of K.T. Ware, "Man, Woman and the Priesthood of Christ" and T. Hopko, "On the Male Character of the Christian Priesthood."

<sup>4</sup>J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology* (New York, 1974), p. 115. Here, the reference to "other sacramental actions" means baptism, confirmation, marriage, ordination, etc.

<sup>5</sup>For the survival of the idea of the bishop as image of Christ, see especially O. Perler, "L' Eveque, representant du Christ" in *L' Episcopat et l' Eglise universelle*, ed. Y. Congar and B.—D. Dupuy, in *Unam Sanctam* 39 (1962) 31-66.

priesthood but also its masculine nature. Unfortunately, this approach can appear somewhat artificial and is open to the accusation of transforming theology into a legalism supported by certain texts.<sup>6</sup>

Before considering the influence which the theological milieu of Second Nicaea had upon the eucharistic context in which the priest presided and what bearing this might have upon the perception of the priest as the icon of Christ, it is important to remember that the very concept of a specifically "ministerial priesthood" in Christianity has problems attached to it. The "transposition" of the Old Testament cult from temple to church and from sacrifice to eucharist also carried with it the attendant concept of priesthood, all three manifesting eschatological fulfillment through Christ.<sup>7</sup> Even though Christ is proclaimed the only priest (1 Tim 2.25), all who follow him share in a royal priesthood (1 Pet 2.9). Between these two poles, however, a ministerial priesthood came into existence through the function of presidency at the eucharist "in the place of Christ." But if the celebrant takes the place of Christ, does he thereby become the icon of Christ?

While Second Nicaea and the iconodule theologians obviously were concerned with the propriety of the visual representation of Christ, their theology of the image must also have a bearing on any interpretation of the priest as icon if a consistent approach is to be maintained.<sup>8</sup> In response to the iconoclastic view that a true image had to be identical in essence (*homoousios*) with that which it portrays, Theodore the Studite replied that this was not so:

No one could ever be so insane as to suppose that shadow and truth, nature and art, original and copy, cause and effect are the same in essence, or to say that "each is in the other" . . . That is what one would have to say if he supposed or asserted that Christ and his image are the same in essence. On the contrary, we say that Christ is one thing *and his image is another thing by nature, although they have an identity in the use of the same name.*<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup>The reduction of "patristic" theology to a collection of certain texts is a problem with which the Orthodox Church has been plagued for many centuries.

<sup>7</sup>A. Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology* (London, 1966) *passim*.

<sup>8</sup>Nikephoros of Constantinople, *Ἀντιρρητικός*, 2.3, PG 100.337.

<sup>9</sup>Theodore the Studite, *On the Holy Icons*, tr. C. P. Roth (Crestwood, NY, 1981), p. 31 (= PG 99.341b).

Theodore here refers to the painted image of the Savior but if the same approach is applied to the priest as icon, several difficulties arise. Since the priest shares an identical human nature with Christ, can he legitimately be called the icon of Christ? Furthermore, the prototype and the image "have an identity in the use of the same name" according to Theodore and this is clearly not the case between Jesus Christ and those who are members of his ministerial priesthood.<sup>10</sup>

The current insistence by some Orthodox theologians upon the priest as the icon of Christ also emphasizes the identicalness of sex between Christ and his priests. Concerning Christ's sex, Theodore observes that "if . . . Christ were uncircumscribable (undepictable), as being without a body, He would also be without the difference of sex. But he was born male. . . . therefore he is circumscribed."<sup>11</sup> This identification of Christ as male does not prevent Theodore from making a real identification between all believers and Christ: "if . . . Christ were uncircumscribed after the resurrection, *we who are also one body with him* would have to be uncircumscribed."<sup>12</sup> Here, the masculine and the feminine share the same body with Christ through the Church and more specifically, through the eucharist.

The "Christification" available through the reception of the eucharist encompasses the masculine and the feminine. Through the reality of Christ in the eucharist, a reality denied by the iconoclasts, images are superseded: "The body and blood. . . are saving food for us not because the body ceases to be a body, but because it remains so and is preserved as body," according to Nikephoros of Constantinople.<sup>13</sup> Although they receive Christ, communicants retain their own personal identities. As John of Damascus says, "we first receive the hypostasis within the order of creation, then we enter into union, by the mingling of the body and the blood."<sup>14</sup>

In the presence of this eucharistic realism, perceptions of the

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<sup>10</sup>It must be stated that these contradictions do not stop Theodore from saying in another place that the priest is an imitation (*μίμημα*) and icon of Christ. Cf PG 99.493cd.

<sup>11</sup>Theodore the Studite, *On the Holy Icons*, 94 (= PG 99.409cd).

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 72 (= PG 99, 385c).

<sup>13</sup>Nikephoros of Constantinople, *Ἀντιρρητικός*, PG 100.447, quoted in J. Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 50. See also the remarks of Theodore the Studite, *On the Holy Icons*, 30 (PG 99, 340a).

<sup>14</sup>John of Damascus, *Oratio 3*, PG 94.1348ab, quoted in J. Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Washington DC, 1969).

celebrant as the icon of Christ are already relegated to a secondary place. If we look at a liturgical commentary close in date to Second Nicaea, that of Germanos of Constantinople, one of the earliest opponents of iconoclasm, we learn that the celebrant receives very little attention as the icon of Christ *vis á vis* the reality of the eucharist.<sup>15</sup> In fact, the analogies which the Patriarch proposes can be quite unusual. Very often, it will be certain vestments of the celebrant that will represent Christ and not the celebrant himself.<sup>16</sup> Nor does Germanos blush in likening the censer to Christ, its fire to Christ's divinity and its interior to the womb of the Virgin.<sup>17</sup> The presbyters themselves "resemble the seraphic powers . . . and they hold the divine and spiritual coal, Christ on the altar with the tongs of their hands."<sup>18</sup> And the chief celebrant himself, at the time of communion, "exclaims, saying to all: I am a man of like passions with you and I do not know the sins of each of you. 'Look, see, behold God.'"<sup>19</sup> These quotations do not mean to imply that there are no references comparing the celebrant to Christ in Germanos' commentary, but these few are relegated to the liturgy of the word.<sup>20</sup>

Germanos' commentary does succeed in conveying the eschatological character of the eucharist and the place where it is celebrated, making it an important link in the developments which occurred in the liturgy after Second Nicaea. Of particular interest is the explanation of the sanctuary (*bema*): "It points to the second coming when he (Christ) will come sitting on the throne of glory to judge the world." According to Germanos, the sanctuary was divided from the nave by a partition decorated with the cross.<sup>21</sup> The eschatological perspective associated with the sanctuary and this partition has been traced to the very first centuries of the Church.<sup>22</sup> It was evidently felt that

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<sup>15</sup>Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, text, translation and commentary, P. Meyendorff (Crestwood, NY, 1984).

<sup>16</sup>Ibid. pp. 67, 75.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid. p. 79.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid. pp. 67, 95, 97. These presbyters would be concelebrants with the Patriarch in Hagia Sophia according to Germanos' description.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. 105.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. especially p. 77. Byzantine liturgical commentaries are well-known for their combination of creative symbolism as well as straight-forward realism and Germanos' is no exception.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid. pp. 61-63.

<sup>22</sup>L. Ouspensky, "The Problem of the Iconostasis," *St. Vladimir's*

communion in the Kingdom did not break down the line between the temporal and the eternal and this was shown in the church through the division of space — first, by the tempon, then later by the iconostasis, both marking the boundary between the temporal and the extra-temporal.<sup>23</sup> Following the victory over iconoclasm, the cross surmounting the tempon was eventually replaced by the so-called Deisis icon of Christ enthroned between the interceding figures of the Virgin and John the Baptist.<sup>24</sup> From this central depiction of Christ at the threshold of the eucharistic table, there eventually developed the iconostasis with its other icons. The entire ensemble, whether in its most primitive form or its most developed, reflected the final purpose of the incarnation as manifested in the eucharist: “That the Incarnate (One) should have ‘a body’ which is the Church, the new humanity redeemed and reborn in its Head.”<sup>25</sup> Through the iconostasis, we see “the growth in time of the flesh of Christ” on the boundary between the temporal and the extra-temporal.<sup>26</sup>

Clearly, the icon of Christ at the entrance of the sanctuary brings a certain redundancy to the perception of the presider as the icon of Christ. The icon of the glorified Christ serves as the gateway, not to another image but to the reality of eschatological fulfillment in the eucharist. In the words of the eucharistic canon, even “the second and glorious coming” has already been “commemorated.” All the faithful are given the opportunity not just to see Christ but to become “Christs” themselves.<sup>27</sup> And just as there is nothing to be “seen” in the eucharist, it might also be said that nothing is really “seen” in the movements of the eucharistic celebrant. If, in the Orthodox liturgy, the tradition of the celebrant facing the people had become normative, this would have aided in the perception of the priest as the icon of Christ. That the priest faces “east-ward” with the congregation places him in the function of representative of the community, especially since he prays not “I” but “we.”<sup>28</sup>

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*Seminary Quarterly* 8 (1964) 192.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid. p. 193.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. pp. 195-205.

<sup>25</sup>G. Florovsky, “The Ethos of the Orthodox Church,” *The Ecumenical Review* 12 (1960) 194-195.

<sup>26</sup>L. Ouspensky, “The Problem of the Iconostasis,” p. 212.

<sup>27</sup>Not in the sense that each becomes Jesus Christ but in the sense that each receives personal deification.

<sup>28</sup>See the remarks of Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*, p. 204.

Such a view of the celebrant has often been regarded by contemporary Orthodox theologians as a "reduction" in the authority of the priest, isolating him from his true role in the eucharistic celebration.<sup>29</sup> The acknowledgment of priesthood as a function within the community is not totally unknown in Byzantine texts, however. For instance, Nicholas Kabasilas states that "the priesthood is nothing other than a ministerial power over sacred things"<sup>30</sup> and he makes a very clear distinction between the work of Christ in the liturgy and the work of the celebrant:

For even if it is true that Christ performs the sacrifice, we cannot attribute everything that is said and done throughout the liturgy to him. He alone accomplishes the special work and purpose of the liturgy — the consecration of the offerings and the sanctification of the faithful. . . . If therefore any man maintains that, apart from the matters we have just mentioned, the prayers of the liturgy are Christ's, he is in this no different from those evil men who have dared to detract from his glory. If you read the prayers, you will find that they are couched in language befitting servants.

Kabasilas obviously feels that a Christic "role" cannot be assigned to the priest in his petitions.<sup>31</sup>

From the examples given, we have seen how the eschatological character of the liturgy illuminates the true significance of not only the eucharist but also the place where it is celebrated. The reception of the glorified humanity of Christ in the eucharist and the vision of that humanity through his image on the iconostasis are the components of the Kingdom. In this environment, the concept of the priest as the icon of Christ carries a certain weakness with it. It appears

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<sup>29</sup>For more on this, see T. Stylianopoulos, "Christ, Church and Eucharist," *Diakonia* 18 (1983) 2, 100-27.

<sup>30</sup>Nicholas Kabasilas, *A Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*, tr. J. M. Hussey and P. A. McNutty (London, 1966) p. 105 (PG 150.469a).

<sup>31</sup>*Idem.*, pp. 110-11 (PG 150.477b-d). Note also how Kabasilas (p. 113) describes the praying of the eucharistic canon; "After *she* (the Church) has named all the benefits which Christ has bestowed on us and given thanks for them, she speaks of the coming of the Lord in the flesh and of the institution of this sacrament. . . ." (PG 150.481b).

weak because it does not bear an equally eschatological character. While the painted icon testifies to the fact that Jesus Christ is the image of God, human beings are not called to be images of Jesus but to be deified in their own persons, thereby also becoming images of God. The reception of the reality of Christ in the eucharist helps make this a possibility for the priest and the faithful. In the Kingdom, all are truly "Christified."

The eschatology which the eucharistic liturgy heralds also manifests the reintegration of the sexes. The sharing of the masculine and the feminine in the glorified body of Christ ends the division between the sexes. It has been remarked that the Deisis icon of Christ enthroned between the Virgin Mary and John the Baptist, the earliest icon to appear on the templon after Second Nicaea, demonstrates that "the mystical body of Christ is neither masculine nor feminine but the place of their integration."<sup>32</sup> Both the Virgin and the Baptist have a eucharistic ministry, the one saying, "They have no more wine" (Jn 2.3) and the other proclaiming, "Behold the Lamb of God" (Jn 1.36).<sup>33</sup> Since the sanctuary space announces the new aeon where the opposition of the sexes is ended, it seems only appropriate that its ministers should be "eschatological witnesses" whose presence announces this fact.

There can be no doubt that the eschatological character of the Byzantine liturgy was strengthened following Second Nicaea. The clearer focus given to both the place of the eucharist and the icon of Christ provides important testimony to the process of theological renewal which makes a living tradition possible. When theological precedent remains unclear, the Church has a sacred obligation to clarify. But solutions very often create further problems, as the questions surrounding the iconic character of Christian priesthood demonstrate. Nonetheless, it is only proper that these questions be raised so that they can be addressed and hopefully answered. That is how Second Nicaea will best be honored.

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<sup>32</sup>P. Evdokimov, *La femme et le salut du monde* (Paris, 1978), p. 226. According to Evdokimov, "in the Deisis icon, the Virgin and St. John are the divine thoughts on the feminine and the masculine, they are the true normatives, hypostasized" (p. 230).

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. p. 232.



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unnecessarily inserted. The Greek equivalent is not there. For the sake of consistency, the heading *To the Genicus* of Letter 7 should be translated *To the Minister of Finance* as in Letter 13 where Τῷ κανικλείῳ is rightly translated *To the Keeper of the Imperial Inkstand*.

A more analytical introduction might have heightened the historical significance of Leo's epistles and made them more attractive reading not only for scholars but also advanced students. My last question concerns the Latinization of Greek names. Why not retain their original form? Why Calocyrus and not Kalokyros, Malacinus and not Malakinos (or Malakeinos), Methodius and not Methodios? American Byzantinists would do well to follow the trend among their European colleagues who tend to preserve the Greek original.

These, of course, are minor points which in no way diminish the value of this very fine piece of scholarship — a worthy addition to the Dumbarton Oaks Texts.

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*Cyril of Alexandria, Select Letters*. Ed. and trans. Lionel R. Wickham. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1983. Pp. lvii + 226. Cloth, \$55.00.

In the series "Oxford Early Christian Texts" under the general editorship of Henry Chadwick, the Clarendon Press published in 1983 the *Select Letters* of Cyril of Alexandria, edited and translated by Lionel R. Wickham. The edition, besides the Greek text and the English translation, includes a very substantial introduction to the background of the letters and to the text, explanatory footnotes, a brief textual apparatus, and two indexes of persons and biblical quotations and allusions.

The book is a work of scholarship and faith. Both the Greek text and the English translation are commendable achievements. Based upon the best earlier editions, the Greek text is unburdened by a lengthy apparatus criticus, and the corrections are kept to the minimum. The English translation remains as close to the Greek text as possible, being at the same time a fairly free rendition, smoothly

running, and highly readable. However, one should remember that Cyril of Alexandria is not the easiest writer to be understood and translated. His Greek presents difficulties, befogged by dogmatic terms and twisted syntax, although sometimes his dry and artificial style takes some lyrical flights into a kind of poetic expression. In any case, his primary aim is persuasion, not entertainment of his reader.

Of Cyril's many writings, L. R. Wickham chose ten of his letters dealing mainly with the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, but also with other related dogmatic themes. They are the Second and Third Letters to Nestorios, the Letters to Akakios of Melitene, to Eulogios, the First and Second Letters to Succensus, the Letter on the Creed, the Answers to Tiberius and his Companions, Doctrinal Questions and Answers, and the Letter to Kalosirios. A translation of the "Formula of Reunion" is added as Appendix. Some explanatory footnotes accompany the Greek text and the English translation of the book, but detailed and systematic discussion concerning the ideas and actions of Cyril may be found in Wickham's introduction.

Between the Introduction and the main feature of the book, "Texts and Translations," Wickham provides a brief but good, very helpful bibliography, and a list of signs used in the apparatus. However, the bibliography reveals some deficiencies; for, although it lists books and essays published as late as 1978, it does not cite the work of Professor George S. Behis, *Contributions to the Research on Nestorios from an Orthodox Point of View*, Athens, 1964, which now is a basic treatise on Nestorios, the main opponent of Cyril. The book would have been extremely helpful to Wickham in his discussion of the relations between Cyril and Nestorios and their dogmatic differences. Nor does he list in his bibliography any other works on Cyril by modern Greek scholars and theologians, such as the relevant treatises by Philaretos Vapheides (1932), Chrysostomos Papadopoulos (1933), Parthenios Pollakis (1948), Theodore Andreou (1955), and others. This oversight is perhaps due to Wickham's shortcomings in the Modern Greek language. Whatever the cause, the omission is painfully noticeable.

In his Introduction (pp. xi-xlix), Wickham presents an orderly, comprehensive discussion of all the problems and themes connected with Cyril's letters. First he examines "The Author and His Work," that is, his place in history, and, in great detail, his career as Archbishop of Alexandria and defender of Orthodoxy, which depicts Cyril as a fierce and unyielding opponent, in word and deed, of the heretics,

mainly of his contemporary Nestorios. There follows a "brief appraisal" of Cyril's theology and a "note" on the Anathematisms that Cyril attached to his ultimatum to Nestorios. In fact, the appraisal is not so "brief" and the "note" is not a mere note, but both these pieces comprise a fair and rather extended account of Cyril's theology and anathematisms. Wickham goes on to discuss the texts of the "letters and answers," examining in detail their sources, manuscripts, and former editions.

Wickham opens his introduction with the following pertinent statement: "The patristic understanding of the Incarnation owes more to Cyril of Alexandria than to any other individual theologian. The classic picture of Christ the God-man . . . is the picture Cyril persuaded Christians was the true, the only credible, Christ. All subsequent Christology has proceeded, and must proceed, by way of interpretation or criticism of his picture; . . . Cyril's place, therefore, in the intellectual history of mankind is assured. . . . Moreover, because men soon divided over how to express their loyalty to his interpretation of Christ, . . . and because this division had far-reaching political and social consequences for the Empire which are with us yet in the political and religious structures of the Middle East, Cyril's importance extends outside theology and what may be thought of as narrowly ecclesiastical. Only Augustine . . . has had a comparable significance, at once religious and political, unitive and unwittingly divisive." (p. xi)

The great historical importance that Wickham recognizes for Cyril in theological and political matters is well justified by Cyril's actions as they are presented in the Introduction and, of course, as we know them from history. For Cyril did not only happen to be in the thick of things, but he himself *created things* too; he created such situations and conditions in the Church, and subsequently in the society and the state, that great changes resulted during his time. Moreover, those changes have endured for centuries in ecclesiastical as well as in political and social matters. It may seem strange for someone to contend such a thing, nevertheless, it is true that Cyril's place in human history is much more exalted and substantial than what apparently most people, amateurs and "experts" alike, believe.

In Wickham's words, the ten letters he selected from the voluminous work of Cyril of Alexandria, "provide a cross-section of Cyril's theological work. The first seven deal with Christology; the last three with the doctrine of man, the spiritual life, the Eucharist and some

specific points of biblical exegesis." These letters "speak far more directly to the reader than do his longer treatises." Also, they "show Cyril in his role as church-politician, fierce in his initial campaign against Nestorios, willing in victory, if not to compromise (that he would never do), at any rate to attempt an honest peace with men of good will." In general, the texts published here are well chosen to "reveal the man and his characteristic attitudes as well as his message." (pp. xi-xii) From all these points of view Cyril's *Select Letters* is really a representative selection of his work, a well-chosen and well-balanced harvest out of his vast field of writings.

In retrospect, the book of L. R. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria Select Letters*, is an illuminating and authoritative study, full of deep observations and sharp insights into the theological discussions of the fifth century A.D. in Byzantium. It produces a vivid portrait of Cyril and a penetrating interpretation of his acts and ideas, stating clearly his great virtues without overlooking his defects. Finally, the work is an important contribution regarding the dogmatic controversy between Cyril and Nestorios, and definitely useful for future research in the field.

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*The Greek Way of Death.* By Robert Garland. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985. Pp. xvi + 192. 27 figures. Cloth, \$22.50.

Death is both a popular and an unpopular subject, but one thing is for certain: it is an unavoidable subject, the study of which can provide us with invaluable insights into a particular society's attitude toward life and the living. Robert Garland has written a brief but exemplary study about what the ordinary Greeks felt about death and the dead from the time of Homer to the fourth century B.C. The archaeological evidence (a great deal of it problematic) and the literary evidence (Homer, the tragedians, and the Attic orators particularly) have been examined for what they can tell us about the relation of the living to the dead. In the author's own words:

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concern for the dead remained consistently persistent.

*The Greek Way of Death* shows how fruitful scholarly research in archaeology, anthropology, and literature can be brought to bear upon a subject that is fundamental for the understanding of an ancient people whose art, history, and literature have long been acknowledged as interesting and creative examples of a highly civilized society.

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*St. Athanasius: Contra Apollinarem.* By George Dion Dragas. Introduction by Thomas F. Torrance. Volume 6. Athens: Church and Theology, 1985. Pp. 632. Paper.

I read this book with joy, gratitude, and a sense of relief: here at last is a scholarly presentation of the Christology of Saint Athanasios in all its richness and vitality. As a student of the Fathers, I have long been convinced that the view of Athanasian Christology to be found in several of the most popular modern manuals of patrology was seriously distorted. On this view, which originated in nineteenth-century German Liberal Protestantism, there is a kind of latent Apollinarianism in Saint Athanasios. He uses the Logos/flesh scheme to describe the Incarnation (the Word takes "flesh," "a body"), and even though he does not deny the completeness of our Lord's humanity, he is disinterested in his human soul; in the words of one author, Saint Athanasios attaches no "theological importance" to it. Now an obvious rejoinder would be to point to the two anti-Apollinarian treatises traditionally attributed to Saint Athanasios. Unfortunately, the proponents of the textbook view, following one sceptical strand of criticism, reject Athanasian authorship of these works. The argument is maddeningly circular: Athanasios did not write the anti-Apollinarian treatises, therefore there is no reason for doubting the Apollinarian tendency in his Christology; there is something Apollinarian about his Christology, therefore we can be sure he did not write the anti-Apollinarian treatises! This fallacious theory has now been definitively refuted by Father George Dragas, who at the same time

has given us a majestic, positive exposition of Saint Athanasios' doctrine of the Incarnation.

In the first part of his study, having examined the history of critical research on the subject, Father Dragas defends the Athanasian origin of *Contra Apollinarem* 1 and 2 (henceforth APO 1 and 2) on the grounds of the many important external witnesses to it (from Peter II of Alexandria to John of Damascus), the internal evidence provided by the works themselves, and their style, studied with the aid of a computer. The most important issue, though, is their doctrinal content, and it is this which is Father Dragas' main concern in the second part, which constitutes two thirds of the whole book. In three massive chapters, which reveal his extensive and profound knowledge of the Athanasian *corpus*, the author discusses successively the death of Christ, the soul of Christ, and the general Christology of Saint Athanasios, in each case demonstrating the harmony and coherence of the theology of APO 1 and 2 with what is found in the rest of Saint Athanasios' writings. In his opinion, the two APO, together with EPI (= *Ad Epictetum episcopum Corinthi*), represent "the great doctor's most mature doctrine on the subject of Christology and therefore should be given as important a place in Athanasian research as his early work on the Incarnation" (p. 10).

One of the major arguments against Athanasian authorship of the APO has been that Saint Athanasios generally describes Christ's death as the separation of the Logos from his body, whereas in the APO it is seen as the separation of Christ's soul from his body. In reply to this Father Dragas argues that in his earlier works Saint Athanasios is preoccupied with the theology of death rather than its detailed "physiology." His main concern is with the divine person of the Creator Logos and his personal involvement, for our salvation, in human mortality. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Father's eternal Son, who became true man without ceasing to be true God. The subject of the death on the cross, the One who dies, is the person of the divine Word himself, though, of course, it is in his manhood, not in his immortal Godhead, that he dies. "The dominant thought is soteriological-theological, and the key to it is the Person of God the Logos. Christ suffers human death as man, but inasmuch as he is not a mere man, he destroys death and brings about the resurrection and the ascension" (p. 246). The reason why, in a work like the youthful *On the Incarnation*, Saint Athanasios describes death as the death of the body rather than as the separation of soul and body is



that he is content to present death in its most obvious manifestation, as the natural corruption of the human body, as belonging to this changeable and corruptible material world, which the Creator Logos enters at his Incarnation in the Virgin's womb in order to recreate it from within. Moreover, at the time of Athanasios, the word "soul" was widely and confusingly used *kata synekdochein* to denote a person (cf. p. 261). Since Athanasios wants at all costs to avoid any impression of a duality of subjects in Christ, he prefers much of the time to use a monistic model of manhood; however, he in no way compromises the integrity of Christ's humanity and insists that it is as man, not as God, that Christ suffers death. In APO 1 we find both monistic and dualistic models of man and of human death; in APO 2 only the latter is used. This does not suggest a real and essential difference of doctrine between these treatises and Athanasios' other writings. The differences are only terminological and are determined by the specific challenges posed by the heretical groups against whom the great Father is writing.

In the chapter on the death of Christ, Father Dragas touches on a theme that recurs several times later on: Saint Athanasios' understanding of the inclusiveness of Christ's humanity and the vicariousness of his atoning death: he is the head of the body, the recapitulation of mankind, the innocent lamb who bears the sins of the whole world. The standard line of the Liberal Protestant historians of dogma, followed by some modern scholars, is that Saint Athanasios interpreted this inclusiveness in a Platonic manner: Christ's humanity is a concrete idea or universal in which all individual men participate. Father Dragas firmly rebuts this suggestion. For the great Alexandrian Father, the universal scope of Christ's relations with men has its principle in his divine person.

Who he is makes what he has (i.e. the body, humanity) and what he does (i.e. the offering of the body to death and through this the abolition of death and the establishment of the resurrection) of universal effect [p. 242].

The modern textbook theory that Saint Athanasios attached no importance to the soul of Christ has its origins in the work of the nineteenth-century Tübingen scholar, F. C. Baur. The specific hypothesis about Athanasios was linked to a more general theory about patristic doctrine, the idea of a rivalry of the Alexandrian (Logos/flesh)

and the Antiochene (Logos/man) Christologies. This crude schematization has led to a serious misreading of many of the Fathers, especially Saint Athanasios and Saint Cyril of Alexandria, against whom Liberal Protestantism has had an unwarranted and totally unscientific prejudice. More recently, in 1942, the Roman Catholic theologian, M. Richard, argued that Saint Athanasios did not recognize a genuine psychology in Christ because of his rigid adherence to the Logos/flesh scheme, an interpretation later adapted and developed by A. Grillmeier. The contrary position, sadly neglected at the present time, has been defended by C. Constantinides, I. Ortiz de Urbina, and P. Galtier. The last of these, in a magisterial essay in 1956, showed that Saint Athanasios' philosophy of man excludes the supposition that the body of Christ assumed by the Logos was soulless and therefore different from other human bodies; no, the only difference is that this truly human body belongs to the divine Logos and not to a mere man. Father Dragas takes the argument a stage further. He shows how in both ANT (= *Tomus ad Antiochenos*) and EPI Athanasios used body/soul language to designate the humanity of Christ, though, of course, "soul" was always taken objectively to mean the spiritual element in the composite nature of man rather than subjectively to imply an independent subject. His intentions in APO 1 and 2 are exactly the same: he speaks of the human "mind," "thoughts," "perception," and "consciousness" of Christ, but in each case he makes crystal clear that the subject of this human psychology, the One whose mind and thoughts these are, is the eternal Logos, not a mere man.

Father Dragas devotes over two hundred pages of his book to Saint Athanasios' general Christology. He suggests that there are three stages in the great Doctor's theological development. In the first stage, represented by *Contra Gentes* and *On the Incarnation*, his concerns are catechetical and apologetic; he sets out to defend and expound the Church's faith in the incarnate Word in the face of Jewish and pagan Greek misunderstanding. In the second stage, the period of the Arian controversy, he defends the true divinity of the eternal Son and thus the doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Thirdly and finally, from the time of the Synod of Alexandria in 362, he has to contend with two rival heretical Christologies, one which confuses the divinity and humanity of Christ into a natural synthesis, the other which distinguishes them in such a way that the ontological unity of Christ's person is lost. APO 1 and 2 belong to this phase. The differences between

APO 1 and 2 and the rest, result from the demands and needs of the controversies in hand, not from any theological divergence. In fact, from beginning to end, Saint Athanasios' great Christological and soteriological message is the same:

... the only subject involved in Christ is the Eternal Son of God who became man without ceasing to be God by assuming complete and true humanity. That Christ is the Son of God is rooted in the perception that only God can be the Savior. That the Son has assumed complete humanity is rooted in the perception that only what is united with the Savior is saved [p. 547].

Father Dragas has written a masterpiece. It thoroughly deserves the commendation it receives from Professor Thomas Torrance, who in an introduction says that it "will have a valuable impact upon Athanasian studies for years to come" (p. 2). As a Roman Catholic, I sincerely hope and pray that this book by a priest of the Greek Orthodox Church will receive the attention it deserves from the theologians of my own church, and that it will contribute to the dialogue between our churches in truth and in love.

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*Death and Resurrection.* By Joanne E. McWilliam Dewart. Message of the Fathers of the Church. Number 22. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1986. Pp. 198. Paper.

The editor's introduction gives us the underlying purpose of this important series entitled "Message of the Fathers of the Church." Together with the series "Old Testament Message" and the "New Testament Message," the "Message of the Fathers of the Church" was conceived and planned in the belief that Scripture and Tradition worked hand-in-hand in the formation of the thought, life, and worship of the early Church. Fair enough. One must praise the

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completely the Fathers of the Eastern Church. Why? They faced the same problematics, and they gave sound and immeasurably precious answers. In any case, the author's faith, I hope, will rekindle the faith of many people who need to be assured by the dynamics of such a book.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*Συναντήσεις με τὸν Κόντογλου [Meetings with Kontoglou].*  
By Constantine Cavarinos. Athens: Astir, 1985. Pp. 221, paper.

If Constantine Cavarinos has earned a reputation in both the United States and Greece for his outstanding contributions to Byzantine studies and Orthodox scholarship in general, his reputation is one that closely associates him with the renowned Greek scholar and iconographer, Photios Kontoglou. It should surprise no one, then, to see this present book of personal reflections on Dr. Cavarinos' many meetings with his friend and spiritual colleague. It constitutes an expression of his deep appreciation for Kontoglou's Orthodox witness, a witness lauded in many of Cavarinos' books and formally marked by a series of essays (in Greek) written two years after Kontoglou's death in 1965, *Hellas kai Orthodoxya* (Athens, 1967), by Cavarinos.

In his accounts of various personal encounters with Kontoglou, Dr. Cavarinos gives a glimpse into the mature years of this great man, from about 1920 to his repose. There is a wide presentation of Kontoglou's thoughts and impressions on various subjects, leaving the reader with a clear impression of the man as iconographer, as author, as philosopher, and, most importantly, as a paradigmatic Orthodox Christian. Cavarinos' observations are set forth in an easy style, lucidly, and wholly ingenuously. The man who was Kontoglou therefore emerges from these accounts as a real human being, not as the would-be hero of an admiring scholar's overstatement. I have seldom read such an enjoyable book about any contemporary figure, free as it is from the tendency to treat recent figures with the exaggerated intimacy or contrived objectivity prompted by temporal proximity.

Of the many meetings reported by Dr. Cavarinos, several struck me especially. I was fascinated by the trips he made with Kontoglou to the monastery directed by the blessed Archimandrite Philotheos (Zervakos) on the island of Paros (*Hiera Mone Longovardas*), since Father Philotheos, the spiritual son of Saint Nektarios of Aegina, was the spiritual father of my own spiritual father, Metropolitan Cyprian of Oropos and Fili. Photios Kontoglou's respect for and assessment of the spiritual wisdom of Father Philotheos, as reported in Cavarinos' reminiscences, call to mind all that I have heard of this great Elder, as well as my one encounter with Father Philotheos at a lecture several decades ago in Thessalonike. Just as Cavarinos' visit to this famous monastery on Paros was "enough to confirm the opinion held about it and its abbot by Kontoglou" (p. 34), so his words were adequate to spark in my own memory fond and sympathetic feelings toward the same. Such is the sign of a good book — especially one with spiritual impact.

In another chapter, Dr. Cavarinos tells of his meeting, at the invitation of Kontoglou and his wife on a certain feast day, with various young students from the Orthodox Church of Uganda, about which Kontoglou wrote several articles. We gain here some insight into the missionary zeal of Photios Kontoglou and his grasp of the catholicity of Orthodoxy — something often ignored by Western converts who find, in his uncompromising comments about the ascendancy of Orthodox spirituality (see, for example, my *Orthodoxy and Papism*, which contains a translation of his essay on Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism), what they quite mistakenly characterize as a cultural (Greek) bias. We are reminded here that the same Kontoglou who understood and extolled Orthodox Christianity as the very criterion of Christian wisdom could also write with appreciation about no less a Westerner than Blaise Pascal (see his book *Pege Zoes*) and embrace his African brothers.

Because I have an enduring interest in the great Russian writer Fyodor Dostoyevsky, I was interested in the chapter in this book dedicated to Kontoglou and Cavarinos' fascination with this figure. I will leave it to the reader to judge this exciting chapter for himself, offering only this tantalizing summary of Dostoyevsky's work related to Professor Cavarinos in one of his discussions on the subject with Kontoglou: "Dostoyevsky has a depth which Westerners do not possess. Western authors are generally superficial, remaining only on the surface [of things]" (p. 167).

The photographs in this book are a treasure in themselves. Every reader will be delighted in them. The book is handsome, durably bound in paper, and carefully printed. My copy, a much appreciated copy from the author himself, is something which I shall cherish. I heartily recommend this book to every Orthodox Christian with a reasonable knowledge of Greek. I look forward to an English edition of the book, which should give English-speaking Orthodox (and others) in the West a charming glance into the Orthodox world of no less a traditionalist than the man who almost single-handedly restored Byzantine iconography to our churches in this century: the blessed and ever-memorable Photios Kontoglou. The great and growing debt that we owe to Professor Cavarinos is substantially increased by his writing of this remarkable book.

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*

*On the Divine Liturgy: Orthodox Homilies, Volume 2.* By Augoustinos N. Kantiotes. Trans. Asterios Gerostergios. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies. Pp. 282 + Index.

One expects work of the highest quality from the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, which has supplied Orthodox and non-Orthodox readers with some of the most important little volumes of material in Orthodox studies available in the English language. Likewise, Father Asterios Gerostergios has provided an English-reading audience with a number of superb scholarly books. And from Metropolitan Augoustinos of Florina, an important traditionalist Orthodox thinker and spiritual guide, one would await nothing but wise and trenchant spiritual direction. It is no surprise, then, that this second volume of Father Gerostergios' excellent translation of Metropolitan Augoustinos' beautiful discourses on the Divine Liturgy should live up to the reputation of other materials from the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies.

The first volume of these commentaries on the Divine Liturgy, also beautifully printed and bound, contained a few typographical errors which are generally absent from the present volume. Not absent are the same practical, inspiring and readable patristic observations about the Liturgy and the life of the divine Mysteries that

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services for the organization of the Orthodox communities and dioceses there and generally played a positive role in their development.

The first part of Phytrakes' work examines the position of the Orthodox Church vis-à-vis the Western churches. In the past strong accusations against Orthodoxy were made in the West by Adolf von Harnack, the *Realencyclopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche* and by Roman Catholic pontifical encyclicals, as well as by some individual members of that church. Nevertheless, some voices were heard on behalf of the Orthodox Church. Among such spokesmen were two Roman Catholics, Franz von Baader and Prince Maximilian of Saxony, and two Protestants, Earl Holl and Hans Ehrenberg.

Today, however, a movement known as a discovery of a nostalgia for Orthodoxy is evident within the Western churches, and scholars actively seek an understanding of Orthodoxy. In this regard, Phytrakes mentions the work of Protestants such as E. Benz, Fr. Heiler, Adolf Deissmann, Erich Seeber, and H. Hodges. He also notes the change in climate of Roman Catholic — Orthodox relations with popes John XXIII, Paul IV, and John Paul II since 1959. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) was instrumental in this change.

The second part of the book deals with the mission of Orthodoxy in the present. Basic elements of Orthodoxy theology and tradition are discussed. Topics covered include: the unity and spiritual continuity of Orthodox teaching, tradition, patristic teaching, eternity and the world, Orthodox worship, the laity, monasticism, the saints, synodical order, and Orthodoxy and the ecumenical movement. As an epilogue, the author briefly considers the challenge of Greece's membership in the European Economic Community and the effects this might have on the relations between the Orthodox Church and the West.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
Chalke, Turkey

*Τὰ θρησκευτιολογικὰ πλαίσια τῆς ἀπολογητικῆς Κλήμεντος τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως*: [The Apologetics of Clement of Alexandria from a Phenomenological Perspective]. *Analecta Blatadon* No. 41. Thessaloniki Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984. Pp. 135, paper.

The present study was originally submitted to the faculty of the University of Thessalonike, Greece, as a doctoral dissertation. The

objective of the book is to evaluate the phenomenological encounters of Greek pagan religion with formative Christianity. Clement of Alexandria was an Athenian Greek who migrated to Alexandria. When he converted to Christianity he became an enthusiastic apologist for his new faith. He wrote an analysis of the Greek religion pointing out its false basis for a moral lifestyle worthy of respect within the human society. The gods of Greeks were immoral, criminal, and in general were not worthy of special attention. Clement takes the time to analyze Greek religion because he wants to show his fellow Christians that there is no value in having faith in multitude of gods who trick each other, who commit adultery and fornication with human and gods. The Greek gods were human and demanded human, finite things from their devotees.

It appears that Clement was himself initiated into the pagan mysteries, and speaks from personal experience. Some things that he writes are nowhere else to be found because of the secrecy imposed on the initiated. He especially condemns the idols as foolishness, of worship of lifeless wood and stone.

In addition he condemns the occult and astrology as tools of satan to deceive people. Clement calls the fortune-tellers and future-tellers "thieves" who have as their source the devil. Clement cannot tolerate oracles and astrologers who are worshipers of the devil, thieves and deceivers of the common people.

For Clement of Alexandria the religion of the Greeks is the product of vain and empty, primitive myths that need to be replaced with the truth of Christianity. Clement was not only an apologist, he was as well, a catechist-teacher, a philosopher, a theologian and especially a devout Christian. He knew well the classical Greek literature and made of it abundant use to refute the foolishness of the pagan religion that was prevalent in his time.

For Clement, Classical Greek philosophy was a preparation for the coming of the Messiah just as the ancient Hebrew law was important to prepare the way for Christ. But the Greek pagan religion was useless. It only perverted man's direction to God and as far as he was concerned had to give way to the new vital and spiritual religion of Christ.

Clement of Alexandria was greatly respected by Byzantine Christianity. His impact is especially shown in the way the statues were rejected and banished from the Church because they were reminders of the idols. Clement insisted that the Christians bear God's living

image in themselves and need not have statues for reminders. The Orthodox Church still rejects statues from its worship in the way that Clement would suggest.

The present book is helpful and indeed timely for it researches the approach the Christian religion must have in relation to contemporary world religions. From an Orthodox perspective Clement's thesis is still valid. That is, the Greek philosophy and the Hebrew law are *propaideia* to the Christian religion. The pagan religions, either ancient or modern, must be looked upon as foolishness of man and are based on "empty myths."

The author indicates a competent scholarly research as is evident from his footnotes and rich bibliography. This book is an important contribution to the understanding of Greek pagan religion as transmitted by the great educator of early Christianity, Clement of Alexandria.

George Papademetriou

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G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*The Ancient Fathers of the Desert, Volume Two. Translated Narratives from the Evergetinos and Contemporary Stories About the Spiritual Life.* By Archimandrite (now Bishop) Chrysostomos. Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1987. Pp. 90. \$5.95, paper.

This second volume of stories and sayings of the Desert Fathers has been long awaited by many, the earlier volume having appeared some seven years ago. Like the first volume, the present work is highly recommended as a rich source of information for those who wish to understand more deeply the spiritual and ascetical traditions of the Orthodox Church. For all Christians living in a society as materialistic as our own, this book, which is largely translated from the *Evergetinos*, is particularly recommended.

Bishop Chrysostomos is a scholar well known to the readers of *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*. He is accomplished and recognized in a number of disciplines, including patristics, history, and psychology. As such, he is eminently qualified to translate these masterpieces in miniature from the Desert Fathers and he does so with lucid objectivity.

His concise introduction provides a method by the writings of the Desert Fathers may be perspicuously viewed and understood. He explains that the Orthodox of the twentieth century must hearken to this voice from the Egyptian desert if they are to find a remedy to the spiritual and moral vacuity of our age for, he states, it promises to "redirect us, enlighten us, soothe us, forgive us our ignorances and plant us steadfastly in that which even our minds and tongues have begun to lose . . ."

Contemporary Western man, as sated physically as he is starved intellectually and spiritually, strives in a thousand ways to refabricate God in man's own likeness. The results are a "new religion" and a "new theology" in which morality and virtue have no place or are subjected to a relativistic "processing" which leaves them void of content. In a world which possesses no moral anchor, which acknowledges no worth in asceticism, and in which the only recognized absolute is supine conformity, the Desert Fathers are, as Bishop Chrysostomos points out, both "unappreciated and — nonetheless — vital." To the jaded, these sayings may appear harsh or, at the least,

quaint and simplistic. To those who are prepared, however, to see with the eyes of the Desert Fathers, they are a key which will open the door to freedom, as the author tells us, "from the vicious cycle of life which seeks pleasure, which is in turn reinforced by the same pleasure to seek more pleasurable gratification, and thus becomes a monkey-like beast chasing its own tail of pleasure and delights . . .

For those who look for "relevance" or for those who may confuse "ancient" with "antiquated," he points out that although the witness of these Fathers is historically intact, their message is ageless and eternally fresh. As if to add emphasis to this, Bishop Chrysostomos devotes a number of pages to the sayings of "Ancient Fathers of Contemporary Times." These historically modern aphorisms and narratives are as piquant and thought-provoking as those from antiquity.

Bishop Chrysostomos is truly a gifted writer and we see once again that he is a gifted translator as well, one of a tiny handful who are equally adept at both English and various ancient and modern forms of the Greek language. There is a terseness, a subtlety and yet a vividness in these sayings which, in less capable hands, might fail utterly to survive translation and thus to express the essence of the original. Without obscurations or artificiality, the English is fashioned into a perfect and eloquent vehicle for communicating the mind of the Desert Fathers.

We often write that this book or that book is essential reading for all Orthodox Christians. Some of these works relate theology, some history, some hagiography and some illustrate other fundamental aspects of our faith. All are, most assuredly, essential. But one does not always grasp what is necessary for one's own inward transformation by learning only of the outward structure of one's faith. For those who would pass beyond the status quo of reading books for the purpose of collecting bare facts, for the sake of erudition, or for mere entertainment, *The Ancient Fathers of the Desert, Volume Two* is not only essential — it is primary. Primary, also, to the future of Orthodoxy in America are the monastic and ascetic principles so wonderfully epitomized in this valuable work.

James Thornton  
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## The Brotherhoods of Theologians in Contemporary Greece

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VASILIOS N. MAKRIDES

THE BROTHERHOODS OF THEOLOGIANS ARE AN IMPORTANT force which considerably influences Greek religious life in the twentieth century. They appeared principally because of the inability of the official Church to exercise a thorough home missionary program, which was especially needed in the country. Their immediate spiritual background can be traced back to various popular religious movements in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Greece. The most important brotherhoods which survive today and which will be examined here are Zoe (= Life), Soter (= Savior), and Stavros (= Cross). The existing differences between them are not so great as to exclude their common consideration. The relationship between the official Church and the brotherhoods has already been the focus of several investigations. Attempts have been made within some of these studies to classify the brotherhoods as sects using, among others, the typology of Ernst Troeltsch. The purpose of this paper is to challenge this position by showing that the brotherhoods are actually a part of the Church of Greece notwithstanding some sectarian features, and to explore their potential for development into schismatic sectarian groups.

The first brotherhood, Zoe, was founded by Archimandrite



Eusebios Matthopoulos (1849-1929) in 1907.<sup>1</sup> He had previously done some home missionary work and recognized the need for a more organized mission. In Athens he gathered together the first devout group of theologians and other working men. In subsequent years, the brotherhood remained under the charismatic leadership of Matthopoulos. From 1924 onwards, a more effective organization was developed and the members, clergymen and for the most part laymen, became numerous. The basic purposes of Zoe were twofold: the spiritual growth of its members according to the principles of Orthodox spirituality and complete dedication to the expansion of Orthodoxy within Greece in view of the growing urbanization and secularization which was taking place.

Zoe's internal structure exhibited some similarities to traditional Eastern monasticism. Its members had to accept voluntarily the three monastic virtues of celibacy, poverty, and obedience (not by vow, however) as well as the principles of the brotherhood. They had to spend some time as apprentices before becoming full members of the brotherhood and were free to leave it, whenever they chose. As long as they were members, they were forbidden to seek leading positions in the Church or in society, although some exceptions were made later. According to John Meyendorff, the priority given to their practical aims resulted in avoidance of any career aspirations.<sup>2</sup> The members, residing in Athens, had to live together in a cenobitic way. Most of them held theological degrees, and a few were scientists and technicians. Their highest number, about 150, was reached around 1959.<sup>3</sup> Zoe

<sup>1</sup>For his biography, see Seraphim Papakostas, *Eusebios Matthopoulos, Founder of Zoe: A Biography*, trans. A. Massauti (London, 1939). See also Theophanis Chronis, "Eusebios Matthopoulos, a Contemporary Prophet," N. M. Vaporis (ed.), *Post-Byzantine Ecclesiastical Personalities* (Brookline, 1978), pp. 87-110.

<sup>2</sup>John Meyendorff, *L'Eglise orthodoxe. Hier et aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1969), p. 138.

<sup>3</sup>Panagiotes Bratsiotis, "Die Theologen-Bruderschaft Zoe," *Zeitschrift für Religions- und Geistesgeschichte*, 12 (1960) 372.

remained always "within the world" trying to fight the new problems that were challenging the Orthodox tradition. This was one of the principal differences between between Zoe and the monks in Eastern Christianity, who traditionally avoided the cities, choosing to live "outside of the world."

Through its ongoing development, Zoe acquired "a mastery in organizational issues."<sup>4</sup> During the period of 1927-1947, the power of Zoe reached its peak under the leadership of Father Seraphim Papakostas.<sup>5</sup> A considerable number of the members resided in various parts of the country organizing and supervising all local missionary activities, e.g., preaching, Sunday schools, Bible study groups, summer camps for students. These members, however, had to spend some time every year together with the others in Athens in order to report their activities and to be informed of any policy changes. One of the most effective activities of Zoe was publishing. The Bible, a variety of religious books, and several journals (e.g., the weekly *Zoe*, the official bulletin of the brotherhood, which first appeared in 1911) were regularly published. Apart from the brotherhood, the members of which were all males, there were various sisterhoods of devoted celibate women as well as other organizations and associations, e.g., of parents, working youth, university students, educators, and professional people. These affiliated groups had their own boards of administration and were spread throughout the country; nonetheless, they basically remained under the spiritual guidance of the brotherhood.<sup>6</sup>

The impact of Zoe upon the Greek people was impressive. Through stressing the necessity of changing one's life, frequent confession and holy communion, and spreading the

<sup>4</sup>F. Heyer, "Kirchen und Religionsgemeinschaften," *K.-D. Grothusen (ed.), Griechenland* (Göttingen, 1980), p. 431.

<sup>5</sup>See E. Psilopoulos, "Le mouvement Zoi dans l'église orthodoxe de Grèce," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 40 (1966) 264-65.

<sup>6</sup>For these affiliated groups, see Demetrios Constantelos, "The Zoe Movement in Greece," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 3 (1959) 11-25.

Christian message to the modern world, Zoe initiated an important revival of religious life at a time when the official Church was by far ineffective to this purpose. As Panagiotis Bratsiotis noted, "for over half a century, this society provided great support for the national church."<sup>7</sup> An innovative element was also the involvement of lay persons in missionary work. Although there were previous religious movements principally sponsored by lay persons, such as *Anapolis* founded by K. Dialysmas in 1886, their extensive mobilization was chiefly effected by Zoe. Also, Zoe's contribution to the social restoration of Greece after the Second World War and the subsequent civil war (1946-1949) was especially useful. Through the influence of Professor Alexandros Tsirintanes, an outside supporter of the brotherhood, the purely religious aims of Zoe were incorporated in the 1950s into a broader vision aimed at the development of all aspects of Greek life under the aegis of the so-called "Graeco-Christian Civilization." This quasi-messianic vision led to another culmination of Zoe's power during that decade.

Following several events during 1958-1960, three of the oldest members of Zoe, Panagiotis Trembelas, Ioannes Koliopoulos, and Demetrios Panagiotopoulos, along with fifty-seven other members decided to split from the brotherhood and to found a new one named Soter. They accused Zoe of deviating from the original principles outlined by Eusebios Matthopoulos.<sup>8</sup> The apparent reason for the separation involved disagreement about the election of Zoe's new leader after the death of Father Seraphim Papakostas. However, this was more of an external cause. In fact, especially during the

<sup>7</sup>Panagiotis Bratsiotis, *The Greek Orthodox Church*, trans. J. Blenkinsopp (Notre Dame, 1968), p. 88.

<sup>8</sup>Concerning the separation between Zoe and Soter, see Chrestos Yannaras, *Καταφύγιο Ἰδεῶν. Μαρτυρία* (Athens, 1987), pp. 199-255. See also Panagiotis Trembelas, "Σωτήρ," *Θρησκευτική καὶ Ἠθική Ἐγκυκλοπαίδεια*, (Athens, 1967), 11, cols. 631-33. C. Maczewski, *Die Zoi-Bewegung Griechenlands. Ein Beitrag zum Traditionsproblem der Ostkirche* (Göttingen, 1970), pp. 36-40.

1950s, two groups were formed within Zoe, the conservatives and progressives. According to Demetrios Tsakonas, the social conservatism of the older members was the principal cause for the split, whereas the new members, especially after the Second World War, had more progressive and realistic ideas.<sup>9</sup> There had been several problems within Zoe in the past, which were solved without threatening the unity of the movement. Yet in the long run the schism was inevitable, and most of the conservatives followed the new brotherhood.

Initially Soter faced serious problems, but soon overcame them and developed an effective organization. The structure and the activities of Soter were similar to those of Zoe with minor alterations. One of the most influential members of Zoe, Panagiotes Trembelas (1886-1977), professor at the School of Theology of the University of Athens, was among the founders of Soter. Consequently, many of the adherents of Zoe decided to follow the new brotherhood. Nevertheless, several other members of Zoe became entirely independent after the separation and initiated an ardent critique against the brotherhoods in general. These events had a negative impact upon Zoe's influence in the following years.

Finally, the brotherhood Stavros appeared for the first time in 1959 and in a more organized form in 1966. Its founder was Augustinos Kantiotes, today bishop of Florina. He was born in 1907 and after his ordination developed an extraordinary mission in many dioceses, which combined uncompromising devotion to the Orthodox tradition with social action. He was characterized by his militant and vehement critique of all evils not only in the Church, but in society as well. As a result, he had repeated conflicts with bishops and people in the government. He was expelled from several dioceses, accused, and sometimes legally prosecuted.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup>Demetrios Tsakonas, "Die geistigen und religiösen Strömungen im heutigen Griechenland," *Una Sancta*, 18 (1963) 44.

<sup>10</sup>See Demetrios Panagopoulos, "Καντιώτης, Αύγουστίνος," *Θρησκευτική καί 'Ηθική 'Εγκυκλοπαιδεία* (Athens, 1965), 7, cols. 311-13.

As leader of the brotherhood Stavros, he was influenced to some extent by Zoe and organized its home missionary activities accordingly. Yet there are some differences between Stavros and the other two brotherhoods, Zoe and Soter. First, Stavros' leadership was and still remains centered upon the charismatic figure of Bishop Kantiotes. Second, Stavros shows a vivid interest for the rural and working classes in the provinces, whereas the other brotherhoods are more interested in the middle classes of the cities.<sup>11</sup> Third, Stavros' critique against the Church and society is more active and in some respects more fanatical than the milder critiques of Zoe and Soter. The fanaticism of Kantiotes is compared by Demetrios Tsakonas to that of the Maccabees in ancient Israel.<sup>12</sup> Yet this fanatical tone of his critique "reduces the credibility of his sometimes justified complaints."<sup>13</sup>

It must also be noticed that, apart from their differences and occasional antagonisms, these brotherhoods — generally speaking — do not compete with one another, since they share common aims and spiritual background. Collaboration between them is not out of the ordinary.

### *The Relationship Between the Official Church and the Brotherhoods*

The relationship between the official Church and the brotherhoods is especially important for determination of the sociological type into which the latter fall.

The relationship between the Church and Zoe was often marked by tension. Although Eusebios Matthopoulos and the other members belonged to the Orthodox Church and intended to work for it, the independence of the movement

<sup>11</sup>Cf. B. Jioultsis, "Religious Brotherhoods: A Sociological View," *Social Compass* 22 (1975) 73.

<sup>12</sup>Tsakonas, "Die geistigen," p. 46.

<sup>13</sup>M. Rinvolucris, *Anatomy of a Church. Greek Orthodoxy Today* (London, 1966), p. 94.

sometimes proved to be a stumbling block to the Church. One must not forget that the Church did not have an organized pastoral mission at the time. Only in 1936 did the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece decide to found an official ecclesiastical organization for missionary purposes named Apostolike Diakonia (= Apostolic Service) to counterbalance the overwhelming monopoly of Zoe. Apostolike Diakonia became especially active only after 1947, focusing on the organization of ecclesiastical activities in the country, on religious publications, and on catechetical work.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, its impact upon and its popularity with the masses were limited in comparison to those of Zoe.<sup>15</sup>

It is true that there were some other religious movements at that time and later, such as the movement founded by Father Markos Tsaktanes and later led by Father Angelos Nissiotis, which remained in close cooperation with the Church and avoided conflicts with it.<sup>16</sup> On the contrary, Zoe, due to its complex structure and rational organization, gained such independence and exercised such influence upon the population that it seemed to replace the Church in many ways. It is evident that the religious revival of the people with regard to Orthodox spirituality originated in this century from private initiative and not from the official Church. Thus, the conflict between them was unavoidable.

During the first decades of its history, Zoe was officially charged twice and was forced to appear before the Holy Synod of the Church to defend itself.<sup>17</sup> In 1914 an archimandrite accused Zoe of heresy; the Church found the accusation unfounded and rejected it. In 1923 Bishop Timotheos of Kalavryta and Aigialeia also accused Zoe of heretical doctrines and innovations in the Orthodox liturgical life among other

<sup>14</sup>See Evangelos Theodorou, "Ἀποστολική Διακονία," *Θρησκευτική καὶ Ἡθική Ἐγκυκλοπαιδεία* (Athens, 1963), 2, cols. 1165-71.

<sup>15</sup>Cf. Georgios Mantzaridis, *Soziologie des Christentums* (Berlin, 1981), p. 181.

<sup>16</sup>Rinvoluti, *Anatomy*, pp. 94-95.

<sup>17</sup>See Psilopoulos, "Le mouvement Zoi," pp. 272-76.

things. On 27 December 1923, the Synod sent a written message to the leadership of Zoe demanding a response to the charges. Following the defense of Eusebios Matthopoulos and the other members, the accusations were again proven unfounded. The decision of the Synod was a great victory for Zoe and was signed unanimously by thirty bishops, the accuser included. Zoe was not only entirely acquitted but was also encouraged to continue to expand its activities in the country.

These instances, however, do not mean that the relationship between Zoe and the Church remained healthy during the following years. Although the Church never officially condemned Zoe, the rivalry between them was quite evident in various dioceses in both latent and more open forms. According to Rinvolucris, the episcopal opponents of Zoe can be divided into two groups. "There is, first of all, a tiny minority who do all in their power actively to thwart the work of the movement." Secondly, there are bishops who think that Zoe "is in some ways forming a church within the Church, its lay supporters feeling themselves to be first Zoe and secondly members of their diocese."<sup>18</sup> These bishops do not fight Zoe's activities, but keep cool relations with the movement and try occasionally to develop counter missionary work in their own dioceses.

The attitude of the Church toward Zoe was influenced to a certain degree by the negative critique directed against Zoe by various theologians. Powerful new criticism appeared after the split between Zoe and Soter, chiefly formulated by former members of Zoe. Zoe was charged with being organized "according to the pattern of Western religious orders."<sup>19</sup> Such "active religious orders dedicated to the work of evangelism in the world" did not generally exist in Eastern

<sup>18</sup>Rinvolucris, *Anatomy*, pp. 87-88.

<sup>19</sup>John Meyendorff, "Eastern Orthodoxy, History of," *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, Macropaedia*, 15th edition (Chicago, 1974), 6, p. 160.

Christianity.<sup>20</sup> The criticism of Chrestos Yannaras also labeled Zoe as a foreign pietistic movement, which deviated from the genuine Orthodox spirit.<sup>21</sup> In his opinion the theological sources of Zoe were mostly Protestant.<sup>22</sup> Emphasis was placed in a pietistic way upon moral perfection, while the dogmas of the Orthodox Church were neglected. By owning private churches and meeting places and by its independent organization, Zoe distanced itself from the Church, the local center of which was traditionally the parish. The activism of Zoe in the cities was a marked deviation from the Eastern monastic tradition. Finally, according to Yannaras, Zoe's purpose was to attain superiority over the Church, made obvious by the self-righteousness and elitism of its members and followers.

Today this criticism is not limited only to Zoe, but is also directed against the other brotherhoods. Two contemporary terms used to describe them are "para-ecclesiastical" and "exo-ecclesiastical." The first term refers to a religious organization which is not clearly a part of the Church and works independently of it, or which functions in a parasitic way upon the Church in order to eventually replace its authority. The second term refers to an organization which works entirely outside of the Church. This critique is often exercised at a more popular level through newspaper articles and is not always confined to theological issues. In some cases, the brotherhoods are accused of political conservatism and fanatical opposition to leftist parties and ideologies. In other cases, they are accused of exploiting the people and being a negative factor for the general welfare of Greece. In a sociological examination of the brotherhoods, Jioultsis also argued that they fall into the category of sects based on Ernst Troeltsch's

<sup>20</sup>Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church* (Harmondsworth, 1980), p. 150.

<sup>21</sup>Chrestos Yannaras, *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Δύση. Ἡ Θεολογία στὴν Ἑλλάδα σήμερα* (Athens, 1972), pp. 86-112. See also his aforementioned work, *Καταφύγιο Ἰδεῶν*.

<sup>22</sup>Cf. also Maczewski, *Die Zoi-Bewegung*, passim.



typology since they work outside of the Church as autonomous religious groups. This classification, according to Jioultsis, is reinforced by the sense of exclusivity and elitism felt by the members and followers of the movements in connection with their unreserved commitment to the movements, their protesting and critical attitude toward the Church, and their ultimate efforts to transcend the Church on the basis of their Orthodox spiritual authenticity.<sup>23</sup> Such a critique does not leave many church officials unaffected, who afterwards are generally suspicious toward the brotherhoods. The same is true as far as public opinion is concerned.

We must mention, however, that a considerable change in the relations between Zoe and the Church took place during the military regime in Greece (1967-1974). All Greek governments generally recognize the close connection between Orthodoxy and Greek ethnic identity and use it for specific political interests.<sup>24</sup> In the present case, the Colonels were previously influenced by Zoe, and after the seizure of power, "the ideology of Zoe was used as ideology of the state."<sup>25</sup> Among the chief elements of this ideological accordance was the extensive use of mottos, such as "Graeco-Christian Civilization," which had been used in the past by Zoe. The puritanism and social conservatism of the military regime was also attributed to the influence of Zoe.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the Colonels appointed

<sup>23</sup>Jioultsis, "Religious Brotherhoods," pp. 74-75. Cf. also Yannaras, *Καταφύγιο Ἰδεῶν*, pp. 302-03.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. N. Kokosalakis, "Populare, offizielle und Zivilreligion. Zur Soziologie des orthodoxen Christentums in Griechenland," M. Ebertz-F. Schultheis (eds.), *Volksfrömmigkeit in Europa, Beiträge zur Soziologie populärer Religiosität aus 14 Ländern* (Munich, 1986), p. 269.

<sup>25</sup>A. Angelopoulos, "Griechenland," G. Müller (ed.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* (Berlin, 1985), 14, p. 221.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. the article "Zoe" in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica. Micropaedia*, 15th edition (Chicago, 1974), 10, p. 891. According to T. Zissas ("Orthodoxe Theologie in Griechenland heute," in *La Théologie dans l'Eglise et dans le Monde* [Chambésy-Genève, 1984, p. 183], the idea of a "Graeco-Christian Civilization" is anti-Orthodox and against the tradition of the Church.

Archimandrite Ieronymos Kotsonis, a former member of Zoe, as Archbishop of Athens and Greece. Kotsonis intended to reorganize the Church and appointed members and supporters of Zoe as bishops and other officials. Some of his reforms were apparently influenced by Zoe, e.g. increased participation of lay persons in ecclesiastical activities. Nevertheless, Steven Runciman's prediction, "though Greece is now the one fully Orthodox country left in the world, and though the Church still means a great deal to the average Greek, it is hard to believe that religion in Greece will benefit in the long run by its subjection to the wishes of dictators," was proven true.<sup>27</sup> After the fall of Archbishop Kotsonis (1973) and that of the military regime (1974), Zoe's connection to the dictators was especially criticized due to "the penetration of the government of the Colonels by other members of the organization."<sup>28</sup> Soter played, however, a considerable role in this connection ideologically, since its positions were quite similar to those of Zoe.

Meanwhile, the brotherhoods have repeatedly tried to refute the accusations against them. They have attempted to show historically that such brotherhoods had always existed in the ancient Church and later in Eastern Christianity, such as in Russia since the twelfth century, in Serbia (the Bogomolci), and in Romania (the Iron Guard).<sup>29</sup> The brotherhoods

<sup>27</sup>Steven Runciman, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State* (Auckland, 1971), p. 71.

<sup>28</sup>D. Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization* (Oxford, 1978), p. 263. It must be, however, noticed that according to Kallistos Ware, the closeness of the connection between the brotherhoods and the Colonels has been much exaggerated. "Archbishop Ieronymos has claimed that his links with Zoe were severed before he became a university professor in 1959, and that, of the twenty-nine bishops appointed during his period of office (1967-1973), only five were members of Zoe and one of Soter," "The Church: A Time of Transition," in R. Clogg, ed., *Greece in the 1980s* (London, 1983), p. 230, n. 27.

<sup>29</sup>See N. Zernov, *Eastern Christendom. A Study of the Origin and Development of the Eastern Orthodox Church* (London, 1961), p. 211. R. Stupperich, "Bruderschaften, Schwesternschaften, Kommunitäten," in G. Krause-G. Müller (eds.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, (Berlin, 1981), 7, pp. 199-200.

also claim that their existence is legally acceptable under the Greek concept of a religious society.<sup>30</sup> Attempts are also made through theological argumentation to show that the brotherhoods are authentic parts of the Orthodox Church.<sup>31</sup> In short, the brotherhoods reject all labels that paint them as alien to the Orthodox Church as unfounded and claim that they have always belonged to the Orthodox Church. This can be seen in the Acts of Zoe's general conference of 1952:

Our brotherhood does not work parallel to the Church. The Orthodox Church is one; we are members of the Church, therefore, we are called for its apostolic service, helped by the benedictions of our bishops . . . Our brotherhood is not a particular church, but an organization, which uses its spiritual resources in order to develop religious workers of the Church for the Christian education of the people.<sup>32</sup>

This position is today fully shared by all brotherhoods. The brotherhood Stavros, however, has a special status. Its leader, Bishop Kantiotis, is today a bishop of the Greek Church. Consequently, it cannot be argued that his movement exists entirely outside of the Church in spite of his many conflicts with church officials. Furthermore, from the late 1970s onwards, Zoe and Soter have tried to follow a very careful policy regarding their relationship to the Church in order to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

Several outside supporters of observers also defended the brotherhoods against the aforementioned accusations. Demetrios Tsakonas, for example, rejected the labeling of Zoe as a Protestant-like organization.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, Panagiotes

<sup>30</sup>See G. Kachrimanis, "Ἀδελφότης," *Θρησκευτική καὶ Ἠθική Ἑγκυκλοπαίδεια* (Athens, 1962), 1, cols. 405-06.

<sup>31</sup>See, for example, Psilopoulos, "Le mouvement Zoi," pp. 276-89. L. Diamantopoulos, "Ἐκκλησία καὶ Θρησκευτικές Ὄργανώσεις," *Πρακτικά Συνάξεως τῆς Ἀδελφότητος Θεολόγων «Ὁ Σωτήρ»* (Athens, 1975).

<sup>32</sup>Quoted in Psilopoulos, "Le mouvement Zoi," pp. 277-78.

<sup>33</sup>Tsakonas, "Die Theologen-Bruderschaft," pp. 382-83.

Bratsiotis considered the common elements between Zoe and analagous Roman Catholic movements, German Pietism, and the Wesley movement in England as simple coincidences. He emphasized that Zoe had always been a part of the Greek Orthodox Church.<sup>34</sup>

This general overview of the relationship between the brotherhoods and the official Church undoubtedly shows that there was often tension between the two. It remains to be seen whether or not the brotherhoods can be classified as sects on the basis of the aforementioned data.

### *Are the Brotherhoods Sects?*

The classification of the brotherhoods as sects presents some difficulties. The Church of Greece, notwithstanding its analogies to Western Christianity, has its own distinctive features that were historically developed and formalized. For this reason, the direct transfer of a typology of sects based on another cultural and religious milieu in order to explain the phenomenon of brotherhoods in Greece may not be entirely successful and may lead to inaccurate conclusions.<sup>35</sup> Although the theoretical background of a sociology of the Greek Church remains to be developed,<sup>36</sup> an attempt will be made here to outline some basic elements of a typology of the brotherhoods. In order to find out whether or not the brotherhoods can be classified as sects, their relationship to the Church will be examined at two levels, the doctrinal and the organizational.

At the doctrinal level, there is complete agreement with

<sup>34</sup>Bratsiotis, "Die Theologen-Bruderschaft," pp. 382-83.

<sup>35</sup>According to B. Wilson ("Introduction," in idem., ed., *Patterns of Sectarianism. Organization and Ideology in Social and Religious Movements* (London, 1967, p. 3), "the highly perceptive typification evolved by Ernst Troeltsch, and very largely concerned with medieval, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sectarian movements, has been given a much more extensive range of application than Troeltsch himself ever proposed."

<sup>36</sup>Cf. A. Tzanimis, "Situation de la sociologie religieuse en Grèce," *The Annual Review of the Social Sciences of Religion* 2 (1978) 221-35.

the Church. Some particular interpretations of the Orthodox tradition or emphasis upon certain points of it are maintained by each brotherhood, but this does not jeopardize at all their fundamental unity with the Church. It must be noted here that doctrinal accord is especially important for ecclesiastical unity not only in Greece but among Eastern Orthodox Christians in general. Due to its insistence upon preservation of the inherited tradition, the Orthodox Church can be characterized as conservative. If a religious organization deviates essentially from this tradition, the Church considers it as heretical and takes various measures against it, e.g., enlightenment of the believers, initiation of legal proceedings. Greece has an impressive religious homogeneity. About 97.5% of the population is at least nominally Orthodox Christians. The Orthodox Church is constitutionally recognized as the official Church of Greece. Within such a closed religious milieu, proselytism by other religious groups, e.g., Jehova's Witnesses, is prohibited and can be legally prosecuted. There also exists a special committee on anti-heretical action, the purpose of which is to fight the religious ideas that threaten the Orthodox tradition.

Bearing this in mind, we can easily see that the brotherhoods are not thought to deviate from Orthodoxy. The old accusations against them were proven unfounded. The later theological critique, notwithstanding its influence, was not officially accepted by the Church, and therefore led to no serious conflicts. The brotherhoods are considered ultraconservative in some issues due to their uncompromising positions. They are unified, for example, in their criticism of the participation of the Greek Church in the Ecumenical Movement. Yet such positions, occasionally shared by church officials as well, are not the decisive ones that can set the brotherhoods apart from the main church body. Needless to say, the brotherhoods take care to precisely follow the Orthodox tradition in their publications. Their intent to preserve this tradition through collaboration with the Church is clear. Further, they do not claim that their interpretation of this tradition

is more authentic than that of the Church. For these reasons, the brotherhoods cannot be considered as sects at this level.

At the organization level, which is not as important for ecclesiastical unity as the doctrinal one, things are relatively different. Each brotherhood follows its own principles and directs the affiliated groups accordingly.<sup>37</sup> At this level, there exists a clear independence from the Church. This independence is usually justified by the argument that any religious movement within the Church should be free to develop its own organization as long as there is no basic deviation from Orthodoxy. For the Church to impose totalitarian authority upon such matters would undoubtedly be a negative development.

If we look closely at the organization and structure of the brotherhoods, we can find some sectarian elements that have already been exposed in the church/sect typologies.<sup>38</sup> For example, emphasis is placed upon voluntary membership in the brotherhoods and the various sisterhoods as well. All the members are adults and usually show a high degree of commitment to their movements. Membership is exclusively organized in order to maintain the unity of the movements. Any major disagreement with the principles of the movements is not allowed. Moreover, there are some elitist tendencies among members and numerous followers. Instead of designating an elite group to be saved, this elitism has more to do with an image of the elect combined with a certain pride in the power and efficacy of the movements. Among associates of the brotherhoods, membership in their own organization, consciously or not, is of a higher priority than membership in the Church, to which they belong only in a secondary way. They feel themselves to be better off than members of a simple parish or unorganized followers of the Church. As a result,

<sup>37</sup>See Jioultsis, "Religious Brotherhoods," pp. 76-82.

<sup>38</sup>E. Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (Tübingen, 1912). H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (New York, 1929).

they form an *ecclesiola in ecclesia*. In Zoe's case, strong elitist ideas were developed during the first decades of its history, which put Zoe ahead of the Church. According to these ideas, the future of the Church depended entirely on Zoe's power and influence.<sup>39</sup> Although these trends did not finally separate Zoe from the Church, it is correct to speak in this case of a "non-ecclesiastical conscience" within Zoe.<sup>40</sup>

Additional sectarian elements exist in the brotherhoods. Moral issues and the austere life are strongly emphasized. Further, tension between the brotherhoods, the surrounding secular culture, and the state appears often, its degree depending upon the particular issue involved. For example, in the demonstrations against teaching evolution in the high schools in 1985, a considerable number of the participants were motivated by the brotherhoods. Additionally, the origins of the brotherhoods can be viewed as a reaction to the inability of the Church to organize the necessary internal missionary activities in the country. After the liberation of Greece from the Ottoman rule and the subjugation of the Church to the state during the reign of King Othon (1833-1862) the condition of the Church throughout the nineteenth century was disappointing. The social problems and the illiteracy of the clergy rendered it incapable of spiritually guiding the people. In short, "a gap was created between the ecclesiastical hierarchy and theological thought; another was created between these two and the people."<sup>41</sup> An attempt to face this crisis was made by some popular religious movements led by Kosmas Flamiatos (1778-1852), Christophoros Panagiotopoulos or Papoulakos (1790-1861), Ignatios Lambropoulos (1814-1869), and Apostolos Makrakis (1831-1905). These movements fell apart following serious confrontations with the

<sup>39</sup>Such references can be found in the Acts of Zoe's yearly conferences. See Yannaras, *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ Δύση* and *Καραφύγιο Ἰδεῶν*, passim.

<sup>40</sup>Maczewski, "Die Zoi-Bewegung," pp. 96-97.

<sup>41</sup>Jioultsis, "Religious Brotherhoods," p. 69.

official Church as well as with the state.<sup>42</sup> Eusebios Matthopoulos, the founder of Zoe, was influenced by these movements.<sup>43</sup> Since the internal missionary activities of the Church did not considerably improve in the twentieth century, Zoe was founded to fill this gap as were the other brotherhoods later. Finally, the schism between Zoe and Soter is especially important in the present case. According to Soter, Zoe had deviated from the original principles of Matthopoulos; the new brotherhood intended to return to the authentic roots of the movement. This is the classical sectarian claim and the cause for a schism.

Nevertheless, these sectarian features are not sufficient to classify the brotherhoods as sects, since there are other important features that do not fit in Troeltsch's and Niebuhr's typologies. For example, all members and followers of the brotherhoods are also members of the Greek Church because of their childhood baptism. Their desire to remain a part of it is evident in their activities and publications. The clergymen of the brotherhoods belong to the Greek Orthodox clergy and are often used by bishops in several dioceses for evangelistic purposes. They obey the church hierarchy and do not initiate change in matters of doctrine or worship. As mentioned above, Bishop Kantiotes is a bishop of the Church. His critique of certain policies of the Church does not aim toward separation from it. The same is true with the other brotherhoods. There are also many church officials who are very positively disposed toward the brotherhoods and acknowledge their usefulness. Furthermore, all the brotherhoods, due to their extensive activities, have developed a bureaucratic structure similar in many aspects to that of the Church.

<sup>42</sup>Concerning these movements, see M.-J. Le Guillou, "La renaissance spirituelle du XVIII<sup>e</sup> et au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle," *Istina* 7 (1960) 133-52; idem, "Apostolos Makrakis: Ses intuitions apostoliques et spirituelles," *Istina* 7 (1960) 261-78; S. M. Sophocles, *The Religion of Modern Greece* (Thessalonike, 1961), pp. 44-56.

<sup>43</sup>See P. Hammond, *The Waters of Marah. The Present State of the Greek Church* (London, 1956), pp. 115-24.



Their effectiveness would be impossible without such a structure. Moreover, conflict with the surrounding secular culture and the state appears not only within the brotherhoods but within the Church as well. This can be observed in the recent strong reaction of the Church against the confiscation of ecclesiastical and monastic property by the state in 1987.<sup>44</sup> Next, the point to be emphasized is that a schism never took place between the brotherhoods and the Church, and it is true that the term "sect" applies basically to schismatic movements.<sup>45</sup> The Church never took the measures against the brotherhoods that are normally taken against dangerous religious groups, and did not exclude them from its mainstream. The list of the existing differences with regard to sects based on Troeltsch's and Niebuhr's typologies can easily be continued. Even by using some more recent church/sect typologies,<sup>46</sup> we cannot classify the brotherhoods as sects due to the peculiarities of the Greek religious context.

It is evident from the aforementioned analysis that the brotherhoods not only are, but have always intended to be a part of the Church. Due to historical circumstances and their internal structure, they developed some clearly sectarian

<sup>44</sup>See T. Stanger, "Greece: State against Church," *Newsweek*, 6 April 1987, p. 21. L. Garrison, "Hands Off! A land bill angers the Church," *Time*, 13 April 1987, p. 10.

<sup>45</sup>As R. Stark wrote, "to say that sects are religious bodies that form by breaking away from another religious body, is, at least in principle, true of *all* sects," "Church and Sect," P. Hammond, ed., *The Sacred in a Secular Age. Toward Revision in the Scientific Study of Religion* (Berkeley, 1985), p. 140. For a different view, see W. Swatos, Jr., "Church-Sect and Cult: Bringing Mysticism Back In," *Sociological Analysis* 42 (1981) 17-26.

<sup>46</sup>B. Johnson, "On Church and Sect," *American Sociological Review* 28 (1963) 539-49. W. Stark, *The Sociology of Religion. A Study of Christendom. Vol. 2: Sectarian Religion* (New York, 1967). B. Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development," in J. Milton Yinger, *The Scientific Study of Religion* (New York, 1970). R. Stark and W. S. Bainbridge, *The Future of Religion. Secularization, Revival and Cult Formation* (Berkeley, 1985).

features. Yet these features, at least in their contemporary forms, do not separate the brotherhoods essentially from the Church and cannot be used as the basis for their classification as sects. As a result, Jioultsis' opinion that "the elitist tendencies of the brotherhoods not only set them apart from the main church body, but also determine the sociological type into which they fall,"<sup>47</sup> i.e. sects, is not entirely accurate. His detailed analysis of the brotherhoods, though accurate in many points, is somewhat misleading. He emphasizes their sectarian features and neglects the wider context within which they are *in toto* found. The overall attitude of the brotherhoods toward the Church must be taken into account, not only their critique against it. Only in this way can the actual relationship between the brotherhoods and the Church be better understood and outlined.

Is it not possible, however, that these sectarian elements could lead to a schism between the brotherhoods and the Church? The possible causes of such a schism have to do with the role of the Church in the preservation of Orthodoxy. The term "Orthodoxy," literally meaning right faith, has some special social implications for many believers in Greece. It is not only a sign of religious conservatism; rather, it represents a deep conviction that the Orthodox Church possesses the God-given truth, which goes back to the early Christian Church. Such convictions manifest themselves in unopenness toward other Christian traditions and religions, and in constant fear of imminent dangers threatening Orthodoxy. As a result, there often exists a pathological attachment to the inherited tradition, even to some unimportant elements of it which, due to historical circumstances, were incorporated into the tradition. Such a conservative spirit exists to a certain degree among the brotherhoods. Consequently, if the Church seems to betray its responsibility for the preservation of Orthodoxy, the brotherhoods may decide to separate themselves from it and follow their own path as the

<sup>47</sup>Jioultsis, "Religious Brotherhoods," p. 75.

faithful remnant. Such a spirit can be seen in the Acts of Zoe's general conference of 1946: "We are never going to criticize the private life [of a bishop or priest]. We are going to react only if he violates [Orthodox] dogma or tradition."<sup>48</sup> The brotherhoods may begin as sects in strong conflict with the Church but they are in the end transformed into church-like organizations.<sup>49</sup>

As a recent historical example of such a case, the movement of the Old Calendarists in Greece can be mentioned.<sup>50</sup> In March of 1924, the Patriarchate of Constantinople decided to adopt the Gregorian calendar instead of the prevailing Julian calendar. The Church of Greece accepted this change. Nevertheless, there were immediate strong reactions against this "innovation," among clergy and lay persons. They considered the action as a blatant violation of Orthodox tradition. Influenced by their constant fear of the enemies of Orthodoxy, they decided to split from the Church. In 1935, bishops Germanos of Volos, Chrysostomos of Florina, and Chrysostomos of Zakynthos (the latter, however, returned to the Church that same year) became the leaders of the Old Calendarists and organized their efforts. Chrysostomos of Florina "became the chief theorist of the Old Calendarists, clearly stating that it was their responsibility to witness to the State Church of Greece, to act as spiritual wardens in guiding the ancient and revered Mother Church of Greece back to a pristine Orthodoxy."<sup>51</sup> Apart from their original

<sup>48</sup>Quoted in Psilopoulos, "Le mouvement Zoi," p. 281.

<sup>49</sup>There exists an interesting similarity between orders and brotherhoods. In Swatos' opinion, "orders occur within the established framework of a church . . . When the order engages in schism (or is rejected by the church), a sect forms," "Church-Sect and Cult," p. 21.

<sup>50</sup>Concerning the movement of the Old Calendarists, see C. Paraskevaidis, *Ιστορική και κανονική θεώρησης τοῦ παλαισημερολογιτικοῦ ζητήματος κατά τήν γένεσιν καί τήν ἐξέλιξιν αὐτοῦ ἐν Ἑλλάδι* (Athens, 1982). A. Wittig, "Die Bewegung der Altkalendarier in Griechenland," *Ostkirchliche Studien* 32 (1983) 309-25.

<sup>51</sup>A. Chrysostomos, "Additional Comments on the True Orthodox Christians of Greece," *Diakonia* 16 (1981) 139.

conflict with the Church and the state, there were further splits within the Old Calendarists. Today, there are three main groups: the Matthewites, the followers of Archbishop Auxentios, and the followers of Metropolitan Kallistos. Each group calls itself the "Church of True Orthodox Christians of Greece," and is governed by a synod of bishops and has its own principles of organization. There are strong signs of elitism and exclusivity among them. They not only reject the official Church but each other as well, each claiming that only its members are saved. The principal cause of this whole movement is to be found in the new policy of the Church concerning the calendar, which was rejected by the Old Calendarists. Their movements began as a sect and were finally transformed into various church-like organizations, without, however, abandoning some clearly sectarian features.

Bearing this in mind, it can be argued that the same could happen to the religious brotherhoods if they conclude that the Church is making innovations that are dangerous to the Orthodox tradition. As far as Greece is concerned, the importance of this reason in causing a separation from the Church and the start of a sectarian movement must be especially emphasized.

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I can offer no criticism of these two beautiful volumes, for none is warranted. Were this not the case, I would be hesitant to make even the slightest critical remarks, since I can only rejoice that the kind of pastoral wisdom contained in a collection like this is available in English. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, its founder and President, Professor Constantine Cavarnos, and the translator, the Rev. Dr. Asterios Gerostergios, for the foresight and effort that have gone into the publication of these two volumes. I recommend this second volume to those who have drunk from the fountain of the first; and to any who have not tasted of the sweet water of these beautiful books, I recommend them as living water to a spiritually hungry soul.

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*

G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*The Church: A Bibliography.* By Avery Dulles and Patrick Granfield. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc., 1985. Pp. 166. \$7.95, paper; \$15.00, cloth.

We welcome the publication of the present bibliography on ecclesiology which aims to assist professional theologians, priests, seminarians, and interested lay people in their study of the theology of the Church and to help them expand the theological and ecumenical dimensions of the Church. The bibliography includes titles in English and other European languages published through 1984. It is divided into fifty-one sections and includes a complete index that helps the user through cross references.

The authors are well-known Roman Catholic scholars who set forth this list of important works which is helpful for greater understanding of the theology of the Church in all its dimensions. Included are titles intended for Roman Catholic readers focusing on the nature and mission of the Church but the list is helpful to others as well. It also includes a section of on twentieth-century Orthodox and Protestant ecclesiology. Section eighteen lists works on Orthodox ecclesiology by contemporary prominent scholars. Though we are grateful to the authors for their generous gesture to include Orthodox

authors in this volume, it is disappointing that they missed important listings of such authors as Georges Florovsky, John Karmiris, Athenagoras Kokkinakis, Sergius Bulgakov, John Zizioulas, John Romanides, and others who have made important contributions to the Orthodox discussion on the Church. In spite of this shortcoming, this work is important for the study and research on the Church, and for this we are indebted to the authors.

The bibliographic form is consistent and helpful to the user for correct citations in writing and research. I highly recommend this bibliography to scholars, students, interested lay people, and parish libraries. Moreover, the volume is an excellent tool for interested scholars and lay persons in their research of the Church and its function in our contemporary world.

George C. Papademetriou  
*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*An Explorer of Realms of Art, Life, and Thought: A Survey of the Works of Philosopher and Theologian Constantine Cavarinos.* By John E. Rexine. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1985. Pp. 184.

The present volume is dedicated to the works of the distinguished Greek-American Orthodox philosopher-theologian, Professor Cavarinos. The editor, a distinguished author in his own right, presents some thirty-three works of Dr. Cavarinos published from 1949 to 1985. In the preface Dr. Rexine provides valuable biographical information on the author, the title pages of all the books published by Dr. Cavarinos, and the book reviews of these works written by Professor John Rexine. The volume also contains a complete list of the book reviews and articles published by Dr. Cavarinos. This provides an extremely valuable bibliography to the student of Greek-American Orthodoxy.

The volume is carefully written and is a welcome addition to the Orthodox literature in America. Hopefully, it will be an impetus to all the readers to learn about classical and modern thought, Byzantine culture and art, and especially the Orthodox experience reflected in the series of the Modern Orthodox Saints. Cavarinos' works on the Greek Orthodox Saints, holy Mount Athos, and Byzantine art provided the American scholarly and religious public valuable tools of

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## The Consequence of Nestorios' Metaphysics

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TERRY MOUSALIMAS

IN EXILE AT PETRA, ARABIA, AFTER HIS CONDEMNATION BY THE Third Ecumenical Synod at Ephesos, Nestorios authored a pseudonymous treatise to prove his teachings orthodox.<sup>1</sup> The treatise was lost; then a Syriac version was found in the library of the Nestorian Patriarchate in Kurdistan in 1895. Its subsequent translation into English and French in 1925 renewed interest in Nestorios' thought. Indeed, the treatise has even succeeded in convincing some modern scholars that Nestorios was misunderstood by his contemporaries at the Third Ecumenical Synod. This is due in part to the treatise's demonstration that Nestorios admitted the term *Theotokos* and that he forbade the use of the term to prevent the populace from attaching an unorthodox meaning to it. The controversy however was not a debate about the use of a term, but about vital presuppositions behind the term. Nestorios' presuppositions deny God's direct communication of himself to humanity, just as they deny humanity's full possibility for deification. These denials are represented by Nestorios' original prohibition and subsequent qualification of the term *Theotokos*. The root of the problem lies in his metaphysics.

For Nestorios, every existing reality is comprised of three elements: essence (οὐσία), nature (φύσις), and *prosopon* (πρόσωπον). Essence is that which the existing reality is in itself, independently of being known. Nature is the totality of its properties and qualities, and completely describes the existing reality in all circumstances, actual and

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<sup>1</sup> Nestorios, *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, trans. G. R. Driver and L. Hodgson (Oxford, 1925).

potential. *Prosopon* is the manifestation of the existing reality. These are correlative elements which comprise every real existence. This is as true, according to Nestorios' metaphysics, of divinity as it is of humanity and of all existing realities.<sup>2</sup>

The essence is the existing reality as it is in itself: τὸ τι ἔστι and τὸ τι ἦ εἶναι. The essence comprises the basis of existence. Any reality, whether divine or created, has its essence as the ground of its existence.

Essence is distinguished from hypostasis with regard only to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, a doctrine which Nestorios never developed. Here Nestorios conforms to the terminology of the First Ecumenical Synod at Nicaea and the Second Ecumenical Synod at Constantinople by admitting three homoousian hypostases, but his distinction is slight. Hypostasis merely signifies the divine essence that underlies a particular member of the Holy Trinity, while essence signifies the essence underlying the Trinity. The term hypostasis, in other words, indicates a primary essence, and the term essence indicates a secondary essence in Nestorios' discussions of the Holy Trinity. Otherwise, Nestorios uses the terms synonymously and interchangeably. Hypostasis means essence.<sup>3</sup>

Every essence has an analogous nature. A nature is the totality of properties and qualities belonging to an essence. Essence and nature are inseparable; one implies the other. A nature without an essence would be without an underlying reality. An essence without a nature would be without attributes, without identification, and therefore unknowable. Nature and essence are correlative. If the nature of an essence changes either by addition or by subtraction of attributes, then its essence correlatively is transformed, and the existing reality is no longer what it was. In such a circumstance, the existing reality cannot be both what it has become and what it was. This absolute correspondence of nature and essence is fundamental to

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<sup>2</sup> George S. Bebis, *Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν περὶ τοῦ Νεστορίου ἐρευναν* (Athens, 1964), pp. 180, 187; and Aubrey R. Vine, *An Approach to Christology* (London, 1948), p. 100.

<sup>3</sup> Bebis, pp. 181, 184, 186, 188, 197; James Frankline Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and his Teaching*, (Cambridge, 1908), pp. 47-51; Friedrich Loofs, *Nestorius and his Place in the History of Christian Doctrine*, (Cambridge, 1914), pp. 70-71; Vine, pp. 65, 78, 112, 118, 130, 133; and Harry Austryn Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Church Fathers: Faith, Trinity, Incarnation*, 3rd ed. rev. (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 342ff.

Nestorios' metaphysics.<sup>4</sup>

The form of appearance of an essence in its nature is its *prosopon*. While Nestorios occasionally used the term *prosopon* to mean a person as we understand the word today, he usually used the term to mean an outward appearance, as the word was understood in ancient times when *prosopon* signified the mask that identified a character in the theater. In this sense, *prosopon* is the manifestation of the existing reality. It has its ground of reality in its respective essence, and is within its nature. There is no *prosopon* without its correlative nature and essence; and there is no known essence without the nature that describes it and the autogenous *prosopon* which manifests it. *Prosopon*, nature, and essence are indissolubly correlative. Consequently, a statement like the one by the Fourth Ecumenical Synod of Chalcedon which describes Jesus Christ as being "in two natures," implies two *prosopa*, not in the sense of two persons, but in the sense of two manifestations of two existing natures: one human and the other divine. This statement is welcomed by Nestorios.<sup>5</sup>

The *prosopon* of the divine nature is the manifestation of divinity. The divine nature is invisible, infinite; therefore, its autogenous *prosopon* is also invisible, infinite. Consequently, divinity uses visible, finite phenomena to make itself perceptible. These phenomena are allogenous *prosopa*. The fire of the burning bush (Ex 3.1-6), for example, is an allogenous *prosopon* of God. It is fire with its own created, visible essence-nature-*prosopon* which God uses to reveal his uncreated, invisible essence-nature-*prosopon* to Moses. Similarly, the visible light on Mount Tabor (Lk 9.28-36) is an allogenous *prosopon* of the invisible divine nature in Jesus Christ. In order to manifest himself through the other *prosopon*, God engages the phenomenon in a syntatic union and reveals himself through the visible, finite *prosopon*. This *prosopon*, God's allogenous *prosopon*, remains in the nature of its essence. Likewise, divinity's own autogenous *prosopon*, invisible and infinite, remains in the nature of its own uncreated essence.<sup>6</sup>

The attribution of qualities is dictated by the same rationale.

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<sup>4</sup>Bebis, pp. 182, 188; Bethune-Baker, p. 48; Loofs, pp. 66-67; and Vine, pp. 66-68, 84, 86.

<sup>5</sup>Loofs, pp. 77-78, 90; Nestorios, p. 247; Robert V. Sellers, *Two Ancient Christologies* (London, 1940), pp. 148, 157; and Vine, pp. 100, 105, 124.

<sup>6</sup>Bebis, p. 204; Loofs, p. 85; and Vine, pp. 103-04, 126.

Qualities attributed to the nature of a *prosopon* indicate the essence of that nature only. The perceptible quality of the fire on Sinai or of the light on Tabor, for instance, belongs only to the created natures of these alienous *prosopa*. This quality does not indicate the divine nature. If such a quality were attached to divinity, then an essential change in divinity would be implied, and this is impossible, because divinity is impassible by nature. Equally, if a divine quality were attached to creation, an essential change in the creation would be implied.

Therefore, Nestorios rejects the theopaschite statements which Saint Cyril of Alexandria includes in his third epistle to Nestorios. These statements admit that God the Word actually became corporeal, suffered crucifixion, and tasted death; furthermore, they admit that the flesh of Jesus Christ, being the flesh of God, is life-giving. In Nestorios' thought, if God the Word is corporeal and passible, then divinity has undergone an essential change and has become something other than divine. If the flesh is life-giving, then it too has changed essentially and has become something other than itself. A bizarre, hybrid creation must result from such a confusion of divine with human nature, like the hybrid concocted by Apollinarios, bishop of Laodicea (374-90). Nestorios is anxious to maintain a relationship between the divine and human in Jesus Christ that would preclude any such confusion.<sup>7</sup>

The union of the two natures in Jesus Christ must come about by means of a relationship which is so close that each reality presents itself as the other without being the other. This relationship occurs through a union of *prosopa*, a prosopic union, which is much closer than the relationship between divinity and its alienous *prosopa*, because it involves an exchange of *prosopa*. Accordingly, in the person of Jesus Christ, the Word assumes the *prosopon* of humanity without assuming human nature (Nestorios expresses this clearly),<sup>8</sup> while the man assumes the *prosopon* of divinity, including the name God, without assuming divine nature. To support this idea, Nestorios refers to Philippians 2.5-11: divinity assumes the form of humanity,

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<sup>7</sup> Bebis, pp. 192-94, 203-04, 234; E. B. Pusey, Preface to "Five Books against Nestorius," by Cyril of Alexandria, trans. members of the English Church, in *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of East and West*, ed. E. B. Pusey (Oxford, 1881), p. xxii; and Vine, p. 124.

<sup>8</sup> Quoted in Loofs, pp. 83-84.

and humanity is in the form of divinity, the one by self-humiliation, the other by exaltation. It is in this sense that Nestorios says with Saint Gregory the Theologian, "Θεοῦ μὲν ἐνανθρωπήσαντος, ἀνθρώπου δὲ θεοθέντος."<sup>9</sup> Man is God and God is man by a perfect adherence or conjunction (συνάφεια) of human nature and divine nature, an adherence that results in an exchange of *prosopa* and in a single, integrated *prosopon* which is at the same time human and divine.

Qualities are nominally exchanged in this *prosopon*. Nestorios is emphatic about this.<sup>10</sup> Divinity receives the names that belong to humanity, and humanity receives the names that belong to divinity.<sup>11</sup> For example, the man receives all honor that belongs to divinity including the name God, Θεός, but he does not receive θεότης, the divine nature. There is no interpenetration of properties from nature to nature. Nestorios denies the deification of human nature that occurs through the actual penetration (περιχώρησις) of human nature by divine nature through which humanity receives divine qualities.

In contrast, Saint Cyril of Alexandria affirms this penetration of the human by the divine. He calls such deification the μεταστοιχειώσις of human nature which he sees in the prophetic image of Isaiah 6.6-7. Accordingly,<sup>12</sup> fire enters wood, inworks fiery properties, and changes the wood into a "fiery glory and force" while not removing from the wood its being wood. Analogously, divinity penetrates humanity. Divinity inworks divine properties and energy, and it changes human nature to a deified state, but does not remove from humanity its being humanity. Divine energy passes into human nature "as by a path"<sup>13</sup> through the incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, and humanity receives divine properties. Reciprocally,

<sup>9</sup> Bebis, pp. 284, 287; Bethune-Baker, pp. 81, 83ff., 87, 97; Cyril of Alexandria, "The Scholia on the Incarnation," in *A Library of the Holy Catholic Church, Anterior to the Division of East and West*, ed. E. B. Pusey (Oxford, 1881), p. 233; Loofs, pp. 79-86, 91-93; and Sellers, pp. 162ff., 168-69.

<sup>10</sup> Nestorios, p. 157.

<sup>11</sup> Bebis, pp. 139, 244, 248-49, 284-85; Loofs, pp. 85, 94; and Pusey, p. xxii.

<sup>12</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, "Περὶ τῆς ἐνανθρωπήσεως τοῦ Μονογενοῦς" ["The Scholia on the Incarnation of the Only-begotten" 9] in PG 75.1380, *A Library of Fathers*, p. 194. The translation "change" for μεταστοιχειώσαντα and μεθίστησι is mine. The translations found in *A Library of Fathers* are respectively "transelementation" and "transmute."

<sup>13</sup> Idem., "That Christ is One," in *A Library of Fathers*, p. 250.

the Second Person of the Holy Trinity assumes the properties of human nature while remaining God transcendent. God actually becomes a man, and the Virgin Mary is the *Theotokos*, the Birthgiver of God. Mary actually gives birth to God in the flesh.<sup>14</sup>

Nestorios dismisses this assertion, calling it a remnant of ancient Greek mythology which teaches that divine beings can be born of human mothers.<sup>15</sup> Mary, he insists, gives birth to a man who receives the dignity of the name "God." Nestorios therefore forbids the use of the term *Theotokos*. Later he allows it conditionally inasmuch as the difference is understood between the name Θεός and the nature θεότης, and inasmuch as the distinction is made between a *prosopic* union and a natural union.<sup>16</sup>

When Nestorios refuses to allow the use of the title *Theotokos*, and later when he allows its use conditionally, he is denying any but a syntatic union between divinity and humanity. He is refusing both to acknowledge the penetration of human nature by the divine, and to acknowledge the actual assumption of humanity by divinity. His refusal is due to the strict correspondence between essence, nature, and *prosopon* in his metaphysics and to the resulting indication of an essence by its attributes.

Consequently, Nestorios denies humanity's deification by any but ethical means: a nominal equality with God by virtue of a perfect adherence of humanity to divinity; and he denies God's communication of himself to us by any but created means: alien *prosopa* or, in the unique case of Jesus Christ, the *prosopon* of the union.

These consequences of Nestorios' metaphysics are riddled by irony. Attempting to maintain the divine nature uncompromised, he limits the transcendent by allowing it natural unions with consubstantials only; and striving to preserve the integrity of human nature, he diminishes humanity's capacity for deification. He binds the uncreated to the limitations which circumscribe creation, and he reduces creation's potential for participation in the divine.

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<sup>14</sup>Idem., "Five Books against Nestorius" 2, in *A Library of Fathers*, p. 42; idem., "Scholia" 9, 12, 37, *ibid.*, pp. 194, 198, 232; idem., "That Christ is One," *ibid.*, pp. 248, 250; and John of Damascus, *Ἐκδόσεις Ἀκριβῆς τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Πίστεως* (Thessalonike, 1976), pp. 298-300.

<sup>15</sup>Bebis, p. 29; Pusey, p. li.

<sup>16</sup>Bebis, pp. 141, 194, 205; Cyril, "Scholia" 6, *ibid.*, p. 191; idem., "That Christ is One," *ibid.*, pp. 248, 250; and Loofs, pp. 85-86.

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## Reviews

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*The Correspondence of Leo, Metropolitan of Synada and Syncellus.* Greek Text, Translation, and Commentary by Martha Pollard Vinson. Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1985. Pp. xv + 143. Cloth, \$16.50.

This is a critical edition of fifty-three epistles of Leo, a tenth-century Metropolitan of Synada and Synkellos of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, and one letter attributed to Stephen of Nikomedia. The volume was published in the distinguished Dumbarton Oaks Text Series and the *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*, vol. 23.

Thirteen of Leo's letters became known to the scholarly world nearly one hundred years ago by A. Sakkelion. An additional number of letters were studied in the last fifty years by P. Schramm and J. Darrouzès. Vinson's, however, is the definitive study of Leo's corpus of correspondence. His epistle number 31 is also known as his *diatheke* (will). The text is accompanied with a precise and readable translation, and with an illuminating commentary.

Leo's correspondence is of historical value and of interest to scholars of both the Greek East and the Latin West of the late tenth century — the first thirteen letters in particular, which were written from the West between 996-998. Leo had been sent to the West on a diplomatic mission by Emperor Basil II concerning the marriage of the German King Otto III, and the problems of the papacy, which was fearful of Frankish control and suffered from internal conflicts over the election of popes and antipopes. As an eyewitness of developments in Rome, Leo relates some interesting experiences and observations about episodes in the West. Letter number six is both



informative and entertaining. Leo was instrumental for the appointment of the antipope John Philagathos, an election which caused him grief because of Philagathos' questionable moral qualities. Leo acknowledged that the Church of Rome was in need of power, "a powerful and mighty man, one with an authoritative spirit" to lead it out of degradation and moral chaos (cf. also letters 9, 11, 12, 17). Leo spares no epithets in his denouncement of Philagathos, who "is not even worthy to live." He calls him "the rogue," the "paunch," the "filth," the "blight" . . . deserving to be thrown in Mount Aetna itself . . . he is "unreliable, unfriendly, the author, father, and a pack of lies, the unscrupulous, blasphemous, abusive dog, the sly, audacious, fickle . . ." Leo's wit and sense of humor were addressed not only against Philagathos but also against himself. Either because he did not take himself seriously or as a result of an outburst in self-*kenosis*, Leo enumerates his shortcomings and faults. In an explosive moment of self-accusation he writes: "How many times have I, wretch that I am, stuffed myself while the people of Christ wasted away with hunger?" (*Diatheke*-Letter no. 31)

In addition to their prosopographical interest, the significance of Leo's epistles lies in the information they provide about his education and intellectual interests. His correspondence abounds in scriptural and classical Greek material quoted either directly or indirectly. There are forty biblical passages and allusions, twenty-eight references to Greek authors, and only three to prominent church Fathers (namely Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, and Eusebios of Caesarea). Ancient Greek authors include Homer, Hesiod, Alkaios, Euripides, Sophokles, Plato, Aristotle, Aelian, Galen, Diogenes Laertios, and Plutarch. Homer and Plutarch are by far the most frequently cited authors.

Several letters provide information on the Byzantine imperial bureaucracy, friendships, and Byzantine perception of Western men and conditions in Rome. However, as already indicated, more important is the fact that Leo's correspondence confirms the persistence of the fusion of Greek classical learning and Christian thought which characterized the writings of other major church Fathers throughout the early and medieval centuries.

Notwithstanding the excellent translation, there are a few points that need to be reconsidered. The translation of ἐν ἱερεῦσι and ἀρχιερεῦσι in Letter 31 should read "for priests" (not bishops) and "bishops" (not archbishops). In Letter 4, the word beneficently is

unnecessarily inserted. The Greek equivalent is not there. For the sake of consistency, the heading *To the Genicus* of Letter 7 should be translated *To the Minister of Finance* as in Letter 13 where Τῷ κανικλείῳ is rightly translated *To the Keeper of the Imperial Inkstand*.

A more analytical introduction might have heightened the historical significance of Leo's epistles and made them more attractive reading not only for scholars but also advanced students. My last question concerns the Latinization of Greek names. Why not retain their original form? Why Calocyrus and not Kalokyros, Malacinus and not Malakinos (or Malakeinos), Methodius and not Methodios? American Byzantinists would do well to follow the trend among their European colleagues who tend to preserve the Greek original.

These, of course, are minor points which in no way diminish the value of this very fine piece of scholarship — a worthy addition to the Dumbarton Oaks Texts.

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*Cyril of Alexandria, Select Letters*. Ed. and trans. Lionel R. Wickham. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1983. Pp. lvii + 226. Cloth, \$55.00.

In the series "Oxford Early Christian Texts" under the general editorship of Henry Chadwick, the Clarendon Press published in 1983 the *Select Letters* of Cyril of Alexandria, edited and translated by Lionel R. Wickham. The edition, besides the Greek text and the English translation, includes a very substantial introduction to the background of the letters and to the text, explanatory footnotes, a brief textual apparatus, and two indexes of persons and biblical quotations and allusions.

The book is a work of scholarship and faith. Both the Greek text and the English translation are commendable achievements. Based upon the best earlier editions, the Greek text is unburdened by a lengthy apparatus criticus, and the corrections are kept to the minimum. The English translation remains as close to the Greek text as possible, being at the same time a fairly free rendition, smoothly

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## The Eastern Orthodox-Roman Catholic Statement on Apostolicity

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THOMAS FITZGERALD

THE AGREED STATEMENT ON "APOSTOLICITY AS GOD'S GIFT IN the Life of the Church" was prepared by the Eastern Orthodox-Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation at its meeting on October 30-November 1, 1986 at St. John's Seminary in Boston. The statement reflects deliberations on the meaning of apostolicity which took place at this meeting as well as the previous meetings of June 2-4, 1986, at St. Vladimir's Seminary in Crestwood, New York and of October 31-November 2, 1985, at Cathedral College in Douglaston, New York.

The purpose of the statement is not to repeat or summarize the numerous studies on the meaning and implications of apostolicity which have recently been widely discussed by theologians. It is rather an attempt, by the members of the Consultation, to highlight and to examine those aspects of apostolicity and its implications which are shared by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics. In other words, the theologians acknowledge that both Orthodox and Roman Catholics "share a perception of apostolicity and of its implications for church structures which in some sense has united us even during periods of mutual antagonism."

Apostolicity is recognized in the statement to be a gift of God to the Church. As such, the affirmation that the Church is apostolic is not simply a statement of fact but also an object of faith. The Church is apostolic because she has been commissioned and authorized by the Lord to spread the Gospel in history as his legitimate successor. The basis for her mission as well as the essential content of her faith

is not centered, therefore, primarily upon the human persons who are part of the Church but upon the activity of God who acts in and through the life of the Church.

The statement recognizes that the gift of apostolicity has two essential dimensions. These are the historical and the eschatological. These two dimensions cannot be separated. Indeed, the theologians recognize that in the lived experience of both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches the two dimensions have always been held together. The apostolicity of the Church is grounded in the historical event of the Incarnation of the Son of God. And, at the same time, apostolicity bears witness to what lies ahead. Apostolicity reveals the events of the "end times" in the present. It is for this reason that the theologians declare that apostolicity "means that here and now the life of the Church — whether expressed in authoritative teaching, in judgment and discipline, or in the eucharist itself — is being molded, corrected, and governed by what has been received from the past and by what is awaited at the last day" (Par. 7).

There is a very valuable recognition in the statement of the genuine relationship between the apostolicity of the Church and the mystery of Christian initiation. It is through the mystery of baptism that each Christian enters into and apprehends the apostolic life and faith of the Church. As a member of the Church, each baptized believer shares in the apostolic mission of the community of faith. As the statement says, apostolicity "is by no means unique to or limited to the realm of the hierarchial ministry. For just as we share in the royal and prophetic priesthood, so also by this baptismal confession we too become bearers of the Church's apostolicity" (Par. 9).

This important observation is not designed to diminish the legitimate significance of the ordained ministry in general or the episcopacy in particular. The observation does indicate, however, that apostolicity cannot be narrowly located in a particular office or structure of the Church. Apostolicity is an essential feature of the Church as a whole as well as the life of each believer in virtue of his or her baptism. To participate in the life of the Church is to share in the mission of the Church. This perspective certainly provides a very valuable basis for a richer understanding of the ministry of the laity, of the meaning of "apostolic succession," as well for a better appreciation of the relationship between the ordained minister and the other members of the eucharistic community.

The Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians recognize in their

statement that their understanding of apostolicity does indeed have at least two essential corollaries. Firstly, they recognize that the apostolicity of ministry must be seen as being derived from the continuity of the community as a whole in apostolic life and faith. This means that the succession of ministers in their office is subordinate to the reality of ecclesiastical apostolicity. And secondly, the theologians recognize that apostolicity "seems to consist more in fidelity to the apostles' proclamation and mission than in any one form of handing on community office." Again, this observation serves as a reminder that apostolicity cannot be reduced to or contained within certain particular forms and structures of the Church. The statement notes that apostolicity is experienced "in the Church's social nature as a community of faith and in its historical continuity and permanence — even in concrete forms and patterns once given the Church's life by its relation to the civilization of the Greco-Roman world" (Par. 10).

The statement concluded with some brief but valuable observations on the manner in which apostolicity has been viewed in history by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics. No attempt is made to claim that there have not been differences in the understanding of apostolicity. Rooted in these differences are various understandings of the "local church" and the "universal Church" as well as various understandings of the meaning of "primacy." Clearly, the theologians recognize the need for further study of these issues which are generally related to the theme of apostolicity. At the same time, however, they state that they do not feel that they are dealing with "hopelessly irreconcilable mentalities." There is a desire among them to avoid assessments "that would too sharply polarize differences." In quite a bold manner, the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Consultation says: "There is no need to claim that what may characterize one tradition in a particular way exhausts the content of that tradition or, in turn, must be absent from another tradition as a matter of course" (Par. 14).

The Eastern Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation in North America has produced a valuable statement on "Apostolicity as God's gift to the Church" which appears at a most opportune time. Certainly, the statement should be of great value to the International Eastern Orthodox-Roman Catholic Consultation as it undertakes its own study of apostolicity. Likewise, the statement can be an important resource for the Faith and Order Commissions of both the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. which are presently engaged in important studies dealing with

the apostolic faith.

Presiding at the meeting which approved the statement were His Excellency Metropolitan Silas of the Greek Orthodox Diocese of New Jersey and His Excellency Bishop Arthur O'Neill of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Rockford, Illinois. Chairing the meetings were the executive secretaries of the Consultation, Rev. Dr. Michael Fahey of St. Michael's College and Rev. Dr. Thomas FitzGerald of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology. The theologians were led in their discussion of the theme by Professor John Erickson of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, New York and by Rev. Dr. Robert Barringer of St. Michael's College in Toronto, Ontario. Papers were presented by Dr. Lewis Patsavos of Holy Cross on "The Structural Organization of the Various Autocephalous Orthodox Churches" and by Fr. Michael Fahey on "The Papal Texts in the Documents of Vatican I and II."

This was the thirty-third meeting of the Consultation which was established in 1965 by the Standing Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

**AGREED STATEMENT OF THE EASTERN ORTHODOX/  
ROMAN CATHOLIC CONSULTATION IN THE  
UNITED STATES:  
APOSTOLICITY AS GOD'S GIFT  
IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

1. In the creed we confess the Church to be "one, holy, catholic, and *apostolic*." What is meant by this term? Modern scholarship, reflected in many joint and common statements of ecumenical dialogue, has advanced discussion of this question in several important areas. For example, historical-critical study of the Bible has called attention to the ways in which the word *apostolos* is used in the New Testament as well as to the distinctive role of the Twelve and to the place of Peter in the New Testament. So also, historians of doctrine have called attention to the importance of the struggle against Gnosticism in the second century for the development of the concept of apostolic succession.

2. In 1985 the North American Orthodox/Roman Catholic Bilateral Consultation took up the study of apostolicity. Our papers and

discussions prompted the following reflections, which we offer now particularly with the hope that they will help to advance the work of the International Orthodox/Roman Catholic Consultation as it moves forward in its own discussion of apostolicity.

3. It is not our intention simply to repeat or even to summarize the many scholarly foundational studies on apostolicity, though at times we shall call attention to points raised in them. Rather, we wish to examine certain other aspects of this subject, for we are convinced that, as Orthodox and Roman Catholics, we share a perception of apostolicity and of its implications for church structures which in some sense has united us even during periods of mutual antagonism. By trying to articulate this shared perception, we hope to carry our own discussion of apostolicity beyond the points of agreement and convergence already reached by others involved in ecumenical dialogue.

4. Biblical scholarship has drawn our attention to the fact that the New Testament understanding of apostolicity is not so one-dimensional as both our traditions have sometimes appeared to presume. The differing theological emphases found there — Saint Paul's claim to apostolic title or the tendency in Luke-Acts to identify the apostles with the Twelve — suggest that there is a continuing need for theological reflection on apostolicity, a task to which we today are also called.

5. In biblical language, apostles are those who have been sent out to perform a task in the name of another. They are endowed with the authority and freedom to act authentically on behalf of the one who sent them. Apostles in the New Testament are witnesses to the risen Christ who are explicitly commissioned by him to spread the gospel of his resurrection to the world and to promote, in his name, the active presence and power of God's kingdom. We call the Church apostolic first of all because the Church continues to share this mission in history, continues to be authorized by the risen Lord, through its continuing structures, as his legitimate representative.

6. For Orthodox and Roman Catholics, therefore, that the Church is apostolic is not simply a statement of fact but an object of faith. The creed says, "I *believe* in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church." Like the Christ-event, this apostolicity is a gift from God given once for all; its content is not of our making. As biblical scholars have observed, the apostles were unique and irreplaceable in their witness to God's decisive intervention in human history. At the same time, this apostolic gift has an eschatological dimension, particularly —



but not exclusively — when the Twelve are identified as apostles. The apostle appears as a uniquely authoritative figure not only at the foundation of the Church but also as a companion of the eschatological Christ at the judgment of the last day. This eschatological dimension does not only mean that the Church, founded on the Twelve, awaits its perfect form at the end of God's plan for history. It also means that the Church shares now in the finality, the irrevocable fullness of God's action within the changes of history, precisely because the Twelve have passed on to the Church their witness to the presence of God's kingdom in the risen Lord and their role as authoritative heralds of his coming in history.

7. These two dimensions of apostolicity — the historical and the eschatological — cannot be separated, and certainly in our lived experience as Orthodox and Roman Catholics they have always been held together. Indeed, one of the characteristics of God's gift of apostolicity is that it manifests the events of the *end* to the present time. This is seen clearly in the pattern of the eucharist, where the Holy Spirit brings the reality of the resurrected Christ to the Church, and it is visible also in the tradition of iconography, which brings to bear upon the present life of the Church both the historical past and the power of the world to come. Apostolicity thus is not reduced to simple reference to the past, nor is it referred only to the reality of a future age. It means that here and now the life of the Church — whether expressed in authoritative teaching, in judgment and discipline, or in the eucharist itself — is being molded, corrected, and governed by what has been received from the past *and* what is awaited at the last day.

8. We frequently speak of our faith as apostolic, by this usually stressing that its content has been received from the apostles. This understanding of the apostolic faith took on particular importance in the Church's struggle against Gnosticism in the second century, when it came to be described as a deposit left by the apostles and handed down within the communities founded by them. But there has never been any need to understand this deposit as an inert object, relayed in purely mechanical fashion from generation to generation by duly authorized ministers. Rather, it remains a living confession. We see the paradigm of this in Peter's response to Christ's question, "Who do men say that I am? . . . Who do you say that I am?" The apostolic faith of Peter appears not only in the content of the confession — "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God" — but also in the very act of confessing.

9. It is promordially within the mystery of Christian initiation that apostolicity is continually experienced in the life of the Church and in the life of each Christian. The baptismal act of receiving and giving back the Church's confession of faith (*traditio/redditio*) marks each Christian's entry into and appropriation of the apostolic life and faith of the Church. As an essential element in the life of the whole Church and of every Christian, apostolicity therefore is by no means unique to or limited to the realm of hierarchical ministry. For just as we share by baptism in the royal and prophetic priesthood, so also by this baptismal confession we too become bearers of the Church's apostolicity.

10. In our consultation, attention was drawn to at least two corollaries which may follow from this understanding of apostolic faith: (a) The apostolicity of ministry is generally seen as derived from the continuity of the community as a whole in apostolic life and faith<sup>o</sup> the succession of ministers in office is normally agreed to be subordinate to that ecclesial apostolicity. (b) Apostolicity seems to consist more in fidelity to the apostles' proclamation and mission than in any one form of handing on community office. These observations alert us once again to reducing apostolicity simply to forms and institutional structures. Yet we also must resist any temptation to locate apostolicity in what is merely individual or in what falls outside the mediated nature of the divine economy — as happened and still happens, for example, in the Gnostic claim to immediate experience. Apostolicity is experienced not in a temporal isolation but rather in the Church's social nature as a community of faith and in its historical continuity and permanence — even in concrete forms and patterns once given the Church's life by its relation to the civilization of the Greco-Roman world.

11. Within this social and historical experience of the apostolic Church, how do we as Orthodox and Roman Catholics conceive of those structures which attest to and assure the unity of the churches in their apostolic confession? Here historians have called attention to certain differences of approach which may characterize our churches. Yet we are uncomfortable with any assessment that would too sharply polarize differences, as though at every point — even those on which at first glance we would appear to be united — we were in fact divided by hopelessly irreconcilable mentalities.

12. In the Eastern Churches there has frequently been an emphasis on the fullness of each church's apostolicity and, indeed,

“petrinity,” and there has been criticism of the Roman Church for tending to localize these qualities in a single see. The Roman Church, on the other hand, has strongly emphasized the need to express the unity of the Church’s apostolic faith through concrete structures and practice and has criticized the Eastern Churches for losing sight of this need. Such differences of approach should not, however, be presented as evidence of an irreducible opposition between “local church” and “universal Church.” This dilemma is an artificial one which arises at least in part when we are unwilling to see the same qualities present in both the local and the universal, albeit realized in different ways. The image of Peter within the apostolic college is reflected in the life of each local church; it is also reflected in the visible communion of all the local churches. There is no intrinsic opposition between these two approaches.

13. In examining the Church’s historical relationship to civil society, scholars have also contrasted a “principle of accomodation” in the East to a “principle of apostolicity” in the West. Yet at a time when East and West were united in one Christian Roman Empire, neither approach necessarily excluded the other, for both pointed and aspired to apostolicity. It was in Rome after all, the imperial capital, that Peter and Paul, “first enthroned of the apostles, teachers of the *oikumene*,” bore witness to the apostolic faith even unto death (troparion of the feast of Saints Peter and Paul in the Byzantine rite). And in the East, it was no abstract principle of conformity to civil structures that prevailed. Rather, the concrete structures of a universal empire were used to express the Church’s universality. Also instructive here are ways in which the themes of diversity-in-unity and ordered harmony are developed in the many Byzantine treatises on the pentarchy. What is envisioned is by no means simply an institutional unity, but an organic unity.

14. These points are offered in the hope that they will clarify and facilitate our common approach not only to the question of apostolicity but also to the question of primacy. Taken together, they call us to exercise particular caution in our use of theological language. When distinctions have been made or noted — as was done above, for example, in distinguishing the content and the act of apostolic faith — we must resist the temptation to leave them in a state of opposition. Unless the distinguished elements are recombined in their proper relationship and proportion, the integrity of the underlying theological reality is lost and the spiritual experience of this reality in both our

traditions is travestied. There is no need to claim that what may characterize one tradition in a particular way exhausts the content of that tradition or, in turn, must be absent from another tradition as a matter of course.

15. The historical study of apostolicity also calls us to examine carefully the ways in which we present our respective histories. This has particular importance when we are speaking of that historical continuity we each claim as bearers of the apostolic faith, or when we recount those particular incidents in our histories — for example, the Monothelite controversy in the seventh century — which may reflect different understandings of apostolicity. In such contexts we can easily forget the achievements of our common theological reflection and retreat once again — consciously or unconsciously — into what is less than the fullness of truth. We must not be too quick to identify this kind of retreat with that fearless confession of the apostolic faith “in season and out of season” which binds us all as Orthodox and Catholic Christians.

33rd meeting, November 1, 1986, Boston, Mass., USA.

### *MEMBERS OF THE CONSULTATION*

**EASTERN ORTHODOX:** His Excellency Metropolitan Silas of New Jersey, His Grace Bishop Maximos of Pittsburgh, Rev. Dr. Alkiviadis Calivas, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Clapsis, Prof. John Erickson, Rev. Dr. Thomas FitzGerald, Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Gratsias, Dr. Robert Haddad, Dr. Lewis Patsavos, Rev. Fr. Paul Schneirla, Rev. Dr. Robert Stephanopoulos, Rev. Dr. Theodore Stylianopoulos.

**ROMAN CATHOLIC:** His Excellency Bishop Arthur O'Neill of Rockford, Illinois; Rev. Dr. Robert Barringer, C.S.B.; Rev. Dr. George Berthold; Prof. Thomas Bird; Prof. Francine Cardman; Rev. Dr. Brian Daley, S.J.; Rev. Dr. Michael Fahey, S.J.; Rev. Dr. John Galvin; Rev. Dr. Sidney Griffeth; Rev. Dr. John Long, S.J.; Rev. Dr. Frederick McManus; Rev. Fr. David Petras.

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# Eastern Orthodox - Roman Catholic Statement on Apostolicity

*Thomas FitzGerald*

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The agreed statement on “Apostolicity as God’s Gift in the Life of the Church” was prepared by the Eastern Orthodox-Roman Catholic bilateral consultation at its meeting, 30 October-1 November 1986, at St John’s Seminary in Boston. The statement reflects deliberations on the meaning of apostolicity which took place at this meeting as well as the previous meetings of 2-4 June 1986 at St Vladimir’s Seminary in Crestwood, New York, and of 31 October-2 November 1985 at Cathedral College in Douglaston, New York.

The purpose of the statement is not to repeat or summarize the numerous studies on the meaning and implications of apostolicity which have recently been widely discussed by theologians. Rather, in their statement, the members of the consultation sought to highlight and to examine those aspects of apostolicity and its implication which are shared by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics. The theologians acknowledge that both Orthodox and Roman Catholics “share a perception of apostolicity and of its implications for church structures which in some sense has united us even during periods of mutual antagonism” (par. 3).

Apostolicity is recognized in the statement to be a gift of God to the church. As such, the affirmation that the church is apostolic is not simply a statement of fact but also an object of faith. The church is apostolic because she has been commissioned and authorized by the Lord to spread the gospel in history as his legitimate successor. The basis for her mission as well as the essential content of her faith is not centred, therefore, primarily upon the human persons who are part of the church but upon the activity of God who acts in and through the life of the church.

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● Father Thomas FitzGerald (Greek Orthodox) is a member and the Orthodox Executive Secretary of the Orthodox-Roman Catholic consultation. He is on the faculty at Hellenic College-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Mass., USA. For the full statement, see p.488.

The statement recognizes that the gift of apostolicity has two essential dimensions. These are the historical and the eschatological. These two dimensions cannot be separated. Indeed, the theologians recognize that in the lived experience of both the Orthodox and the Roman Catholic Churches the two dimensions have always been held together. The apostolicity of the church is grounded in the historical event of the incarnation of the Son of God. And, at the same time, apostolicity bears witness to what lies ahead. Apostolicity reveals the events of the "end times" in the present. It is for this reason that the theologians declare that apostolicity "means that here and now the life of the church — whether expressed in authoritative teaching, in judgment and discipline, or in the eucharist itself — is being moulded, corrected, and governed by what has been received from the past and by what is awaited at the last day" (par. 7).

There is a very valuable recognition in the statement of the genuine relationship between the apostolicity of the church and the mystery of Christian initiation. It is through the mystery of baptism that each Christian enters into and apprehends the apostolic life and faith of the church. As a member of the church, each baptized believer shares in the apostolic mission of the community of faith. As the statement says, apostolicity "is by no means unique to or limited to the realm of hierarchical ministry. For just as we share in the royal and prophetic priesthood, so also by this baptismal confession we too become bearers of the church's apostolicity" (par. 9).

This important observation is not designed to diminish the legitimate significance of the ordained ministry in general or the episcopacy in particular. The observation does indicate, however, that apostolicity cannot be narrowly located in a particular office or structure of the church. Apostolicity is an essential feature of the church as a whole as well as the life of each believer in virtue of his or her baptism. To participate in the life of the church is to share in the mission of the church. This perspective certainly provides a very valuable basis for a richer understanding of the ministry of the laity, of the meaning of apostolic succession, as well for a better appreciation of the relationship between the ordained minister and the other members of the eucharistic community.

The Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians recognize in their statement that their understanding of apostolicity does indeed have at least two essential corollaries. Firstly, they recognize that the apostolicity of ministry must be seen as being derived from the continuity of the community as a whole in apostolic life and faith. This means that the succession of ministers in their office is subordinate to the reality of ecclesiastical apostolicity. And secondly, the theologians recognize that apostolicity "seems to consist more in fidelity to the apostles' proclamation and mission than in any one form of handing on community office" (par. 10). Again, this observation serves as a reminder that apostolicity cannot be reduced to or contained within certain particular forms and structures of the church. The statement notes that apostolicity is experienced "in the church's social nature as a community of faith and in its historical continuity and permanence — even in concrete forms and patterns once given the church's life by its relation to the civilization of the Greco-Roman world" (par. 10).

The statement concludes with some brief but valuable observations on the manner in which apostolicity has been viewed in history by both Orthodox and Roman Catholics. No attempt is made to claim that there have not been differences in the understanding of apostolicity. Rooted in these differences are various understandings of the "local church" and the "universal church" as well as various understandings of the meaning of "primacy". Clearly, the theologians recognize the need for further study of these

issues which are generally related to the theme of apostolicity. At the same time, however, they state that they do not feel that they are dealing with “hopelessly irreconcilable mentalities” (par. 11). There is a desire among them to avoid assessments “that would too sharply polarize differences” (par. 11). In quite a bold manner, the Orthodox and Roman Catholic consultation says: “There is no need to claim that what may characterize one tradition in a particular way exhausts the content of that tradition or, in turn, must be absent from another tradition as a matter of course” (par. 14).

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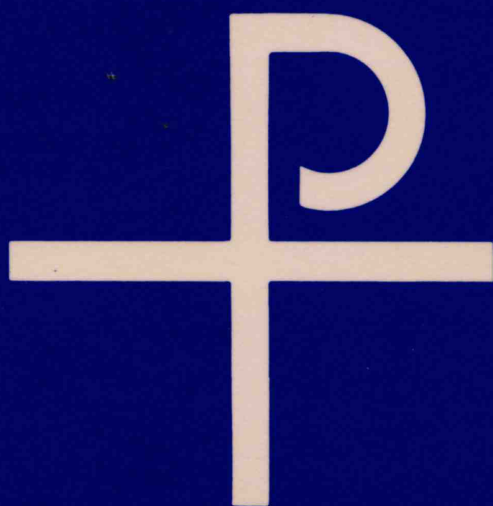
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**The  
Greek  
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Review**



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**Holy Cross  
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School of Theology  
Hellenic College**

**1937-1987**

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## Editor's Note

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THE PRESENT NUMBER OF *THE GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL Review* is dedicated, on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, to the memory of its alumni who have fallen asleep in the Lord. "May their memory be eternal."

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## Reviews

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**ΤΙΤΛΟΙ ΟΦΦΙΚΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΑΞΙΩΜΑΤΑ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΗ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΙΚΗ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΩ ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ.** By Iakovos Phililis. Athens: Astir Editions-Al. & E. Papademetriou, 1985. Pp. 324. \$30.00, cloth.

Bishop Iakovos of Catania's book was sent out to all the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Order of Saint Andrew. It would be interesting to know how many of them and others have read this tightly organized book on the titles, offices, and posts in the Byzantine Empire and the Orthodox Christian Church. It is a magnificent case study of some of the ways in which the *Roman* bureaucratic tradition and *Latin* vocabulary became part and parcel of the Byzantine tradition and the Orthodox Church. Bishop Iakovos rightly notes that the three principal elements that contributed substantially to the creation of the Byzantine State were Roman political ideas, the Christian religion, and Greek culture. He tends to underestimate the role of the Latin language and Roman hierarchical titles and bureaucratic functions, which his book beautifully illustrates on page after page, as contributing to this Byzantine Christian amalgam to which in our own day the Greek Orthodox Church has become heir.

*Titles, Offices, and Posts in the Byzantine Empire and in the Orthodox Christian Church* is a wonderful encyclopedic compendium that is divided into two convenient parts: (1) "Titles and Offices according to the Order (Ranking) of the Church." There is a detailed listing of primary and secondary sources from which the author has drawn his information and each title, office or post is explained etymologically and then historically. If there are

ancient Greek or Roman predecessors, these are described briefly, then the meaning of the office in the Byzantine Empire is presented, followed by its past and current use in the Orthodox Church. Every one of the six core chapters is heavily annotated, and there are exemplary primary and secondary bibliographies, together with a list of errata at the end of the book. The book is written in a dated *katharévousa* that will seem quaint to those familiar with current day modern Greek but comfortably familiar to those trained in classical Greek.

The author's splendid collection of details on each office, title or post (from *Aktovarios* to Patriarch) can be used selectively or read as a continuous history from a specialized point of view. His introductory material and conclusion try to set all this in historical context — one that is conscious of the ancient Greek and Byzantine past and its relation to the Orthodox Church at its height under the Byzantines, its plight under the Ottomans, and its present situation in an extremely diverse world. Bishop Iakovos insists that "Byzantium saved from destruction ancient Roman law, Greek philosophy, philology and science, this priceless heritage for humankind, which it conveyed to Europe after its fall which was, by that time, ready to receive it. So Byzantium fulfilled its great contribution to the history of the world" (p. 302). The relationship between that broad claim and the statement that "In the present study of the imperial order, about offices, titles, and posts, there is a narrow relation between Hellenism and the Orthodox Church, to the degree that Christianity made use of the Greek spirit, Greek thought and wisdom through its transformation and development, Byzantium which is a transference from Old Rome with Roman political thoughts to Constantinople, the New Rome, with Greek ideas and a special way of life, created its own world, the Greco-Christian civilization" (p. 303) is not at all clear from Bishop Iakovos' study. What is clear is that the study of Byzantine titles and offices, now purely honorific, reveals Byzantine culture to have been an amalgam of Greek, Roman, and Christian elements — but that was not His Grace's primary job in this very useful book that should be studied, relished, and enjoyed.

John E. Rexine  
Colgate University

*St. Nikephoros of Chios*. By Constantine Cavarnos. Modern Orthodox Saints 4. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1986, 2nd edition. Pp. ix, 124. Frontispiece + illustration. \$6.00, paper.

The original edition of this very handsomely produced book was published in 1976. The present edition contains everything the first edition contained, plus English translations of the Apolytikion, Kontakion, and Megalynarion in honor of Saint Nikephoros of Chios that appear at the beginning of the book; a photograph of one of the earliest icons depicting the saint; an additional select passage from his prose writings; and corrections of typographical errors.

Dr. Cavarnos again demonstrates for us the vitality of the series on Modern Orthodox Saints that he inaugurated in 1971. He has filled a dire need for such a series in the English-speaking world, and the reissuing of volume 4 on Saint Nikephoros of Chios (1750-1821) is only the most recent example of this demand. Dr. Cavarnos provides the preface and introductory material on the saint, a translation of "The Life of St. Nikephoros by Emily Sarou"; a comprehensive list of the works of the saint; selected passages from his prose works; an anthology of his poetry; notes; and brief biographies of eleven modern martyrs whom Saint Nikephoros mentions; a selected bibliography; and an index.

Saint Nikephoros, consistently Orthodox in his thoughts and his actions, sees as primary the development of the virtues by which man achieves likeness to God and through which *theosis* (divinization) is attained. Union with God is thus man's ultimate aim, as is participation in God's perfection and glory. Blessedness through grace is viewed as man's highest goal and one that characterized the lives of the saints. Though Saint Nikephoros never left Chios, his influence and reputation went well beyond the island and his life and works will no doubt interest students of the cultural and religious history of Greece during the period of Ottoman Turkish occupation, as well as those concerned with Orthodox Christian spirituality.

John E. Rexine  
Colgate University

*Churches Respond to BEM: Official Responses to the "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry" Text, Vol. 1.* By Max Thurian (ed.). Faith and Order Paper 129. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986. Pp. 129.

This is a most useful, small volume pertaining to the already celebrated Lima document on "Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry." It begins with a very informative preface by Gunther Gassmann, who is the director of the WCC Faith and Order Secretariat, followed by an excellent introduction by Brother Max Thurian, who has been one of the leading contributors in the formulation of the Lima document. Max Thurian gives us a short history of the "ecumenical tradition," or the history of the ecumenical encounters which finally led to the writing and the wide circulation of the Lima document (Lima, Peru, 1982). The latter has been published in many languages and has provoked much discussion throughout the world. Indeed, Thurian is correct when he states that the Lima document is understood and welcomed by the different churches on the basis of their own ecclesiological doctrine. He makes the point that at the same time the Lima document is based on "sacramental" ecclesiology and on a long-established "ecumenical tradition." Thus on the whole, the Lima document has been received positively by many churches, even clarifications and amplifications were called for on specific points. Thurian correctly points out, moreover, that as far as its "reception" is concerned, it could not be received in the same way as the decisions of the ecumenical synods, that is, as authoritative explanations of the word of God (p. 9). On the basis of this statement, he proceeds to make it clear that the purpose of the Lima document "is to encourage our growth in faith with the help of all baptized Christians who long for one and the same Eucharist, celebrated by communities and ministries reconciled in the Church of Christ, visibly gathering all Christians together for a common life and a common witness and service to the world" (p. 9). Thurian then discusses in depth the problems which the authors of the Lima document faced; he adds more information and explains the theological background upon which the Lima document was constructed. He is fully aware of the positive and negative objections which the document raised, as for instance, the criticism that it is "too sacramental." In this instance, he tries to reconcile the gulf between the catholic churches and those of the

Reformation. He concludes with the hope of the Lima document itself: that a mutual recognition of the ordained ministries of the individual churches might eventually be realized in the spirit of Christian sincerity. And he calls upon all Christians to cease to cherish within themselves an attitude of suspicion towards their sister churches, to learn to trust one another, and to have full confidence in each other. No one can object to this noble calling.

After this long and thoughtful introduction, the official responses and comments of ten Protestant churches follow. The Lutheran Church in America, for instance, rejoices over the convergence in the text with its promise of the realization of greater visible unity of the Church. She questions, however, the imbalance which stresses the catholic and ecumenical traditions with a discreet disfavor against the evangelical foundations of the Church. The Elbian Evangelical Lutheran Church complains that there is no adequate account in the Lima document of the central significance of faith in the context of the Lord's Supper. The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland voices its strong reservations on the way the document treats the sacrament of baptism, especially infant baptism and re-baptism, as well as the three-fold order of ministry. The Church of Scotland (Reformed) asks the authors of the documents for a more profound joint study of the content of the ministry of Christ in conjunction with the ordained ministries of the churches. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) commented that unity is never achieved by conformity in language and practice, but in allowing our diversities and gifts to be shared in communion. All in all, the Protestant churches express their happiness with the effort in establishing a common ground for contemporary Christian theological language and basic Christian liturgical principles. However, they caution the authors on the difficulty of attaining the reconciliation of traditions which have been apart for so many centuries. The Disciples of Christ, for instance, claim that they see the ministry of women as a gift to the Church from the Holy Spirit, a stance which will not facilitate a more effective convergence of faith and practice among the churches. This in view of the fact that although all the churches are ready to accept a central position for women in the life of the Church, their ordination to the priesthood is unacceptable by many of them.

Finally, this useful book concludes with a long statement issued by the Inter-Orthodox Symposium on BEM which was held at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Massachusetts,

11-18 June 1985. This is a statement which has been written with great care and responsibility. The Orthodox sincerely welcome the Lima document as an experience of a new stage in the history of the ecumenical movement, and as expressing, at the same time, in many sections the faith of the Orthodox Church on the basis of her traditional biblical and patristic theology. It is also made clear that the BEM document uses terminology to which the Orthodox are not accustomed. Secondly, the Orthodox point out that the reception of the BEM document does not necessarily imply an ecclesiological or practical recognition of the ministry and sacraments of non-Orthodox churches. Also noted are some specific issues which should have been discussed in the document, as for example, the role of exorcism and renunciation of the evil one in the baptismal rite, or the relationship between the Eucharist and repentance, confession, and reconciliation in the eucharistic congregation. Finally, they note that a clear understanding should be formulated concerning apostolic succession and the relation between bishop, presbyter, and deacon.

There is no doubt that the Orthodox contribution of stressing the close relationship between "the rule of faith" and "the rule of prayer" will eventually help those who want to see new horizons towards Christian unity through the BEM document. It should also be added that this small book, written in a precise and lucid way, must be read by all those who are genuinely interested in the union of all Christians within the perimeters of the one, holy, apostolic, and catholic Church of Christ.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*The Church, the Liturgy and the Soul of Man: The Mystagogia of St. Maximus the Confessor.* Trans. with an Introduction and Commentaries by Dom Julian Stead, O.S.B. Still River, MA: St. Bede's Publications, 1982. Pp. 120.

Thanks to Dom Julian Stead, we have a useful and good translation of the celebrated book of Saint Maximos the Confessor under the title *Mystagogia*. Mr. Stead offers a short historical note concerning Saint Maximos whom he calls one of the great Fathers of the Church. He is right in emphasizing the considerable influence Saint Maximos

exerted on the spiritual and mystical life of the Church, and he correctly points to Maximos' strict devotion to Orthodox doctrine during the Monothelite controversy.

The author's commentary is lucid and interesting, although one may question his pondering on ecumenism and his inclusion of Aristotle. I agree with him however that no one can find the lowest common denominator of faith leading to unity in Maximos' work. On the contrary, true unity would be the result of true faith and love in a oneness of thought, will, and mind under the kinship of God the Word.

Statements like, "The Church is not exactly God's incarnation" (p. 19) or "I do not know how concerned the United Nations is with it — that is, unity with God" (p. 20) sound a little strange and may be misunderstood.

The commentary on the "Soul, Contemplation, and the Union with God" needs a good psychological background and should be carefully read. The commentary on the "Image of Man" is most successful, and it gives a good insight into Saint Maximos' anthropology in its proper theological and liturgical framework.

Finally, the text of the *Mystagogia* itself is the great contribution of this book and should be highly appreciated. The translation of the original text from Migne (PG 91) is well done without sterility of style, but with apparent effusion of the contemplative language of Saint Maximos. Indeed, by reading Saint Maximos' *Mystagogia* one becomes acquainted with the liturgical life of his times (sixth-seventh centuries) as well as with the wonderful, allegorical, and spiritual interpretation of the Divine Liturgy. For instance, at the First Entrance we are called upon to separate ourselves from all the confusion and delusions of the outside world. The reading of the Holy Gospel declares the believers' utter rejection of the primordial error, and the reception of the holy, life-giving sacrament proclaims our future adoption as sons, the goodness of our God . . . and the deification which will come without exception to all the worthy.

The author must be congratulated for his splendid effort to make Saint Maximos' work accessible in a good and useful translation.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*Symeon the New Theologian, the Practical and Theological Chapters and the Three Theological Discourses.* Trans. with an Introduction by Paul McGuckin, CP. (Cistercian Studies Series: Number Forty-One). Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1982. Pp. 1-144.

Saint Symeon the New Theologian has recently become very popular in Western theological literature. The massive increase of charismatics and pentecostals, and the apparent emphasis on the life of the Spirit by so-called reborn Christians brought about an additional and fresh interest in Saint Symeon, the mystical theologian of the eleventh century. Paul McGuckin must be congratulated for his balanced introduction and excellent translation of these two important works of Saint Symeon, namely *The Practical and Theological Chapters* and *The Three Theological Discourses*. He correctly notes that the most important information comes from Niketas Stethatos, the devoted disciple, biographer, and first editor of Saint Symeon's works. Mr. McGuckin gives us a short but poignant description of Saint Symeon's life and brings out the "cult" of his spiritual father Symeon Eulabes, as well as his confrontation with the ecclesiastical authorities of Constantinople, most especially Patriarch Sergios and his "synkellos" Stephen, the metropolitan of Nikomedia. He also discusses quite succinctly the problematics behind this clash. There is the emphasis by Saint Symeon, for instance, on the authority of the "spirituals," who were primarily monks who claimed to have the authority to hear confessions and to absolve sins. Does this mean a degradation of the office of the priesthood? Does this mean that people outside of the hierarchical structure of the Church have the authority to absolve sins? Is this not detrimental to the authority of the Church? Mr. McGuckin believes that Saint Symeon claimed that the simple fact of possessing the sacrament of orders is not solidly to be relied on, and that a static, conservative preservation of the deposit of dogma was not enough for the true Christian. There is no doubt that an external and superficial study of the works of Saint Symeon may sometimes lead the reader to believe that there is a sort of dualistic approach in Saint Symeon's theology. One can detect sometimes a special emphasis on the life of the Spirit, and on the other hand, one can see that he did not give an inch as far as his respect to the doctrinal formulas and the liturgical function of the priesthood. Besides his theological discourses, Saint Symeon discusses continuously Orthodox doctrines and stresses the importance of the



moral obligations of the Christian. Nevertheless, I would agree with Mr. McGuckin that Saint Symeon would never have accepted a theological tradition unless it be inaugurated and governed by the experience of the Holy Spirit. In other words, illumination in accordance with Saint Symeon's teaching becomes an integral part of the Orthodox thought and life.

Mr. McGuckin used as the basis of his translation the Greek text produced by *Sources Chretiennes*, which was a good choice. The translation is smooth and stylistically attractive. By reading these texts one cannot but become light because, as Saint Symeon says, all that comes from the Holy Trinity is light and is given to us as arising from the Light. Then, our lives are overflowed with all the breath-taking gifts of God; we earn the reward of the vision of God, and become truly participants in the divine nature.

Indeed we owe many thanks to the translator for making these beautiful texts accessible, in a pertinent way, to the contemporary English reader.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*TO MYSTHPION TOY ΘΑΝΑΤΟΥ* [The Mystery of Death]. By Nikolaos P. Vasiliades. 4th edition. Athens: Sotir Brotherhood of Theologians, 1980. Pp. 564.

Nikolaos Vasiliades has offered a great service to contemporary Orthodox theology by dealing in a most extensive and detailed manner with one of the most provocative issues of all time — death. In his massive book he deals with painstaking care with all aspects of death, and presents the Orthodox understanding of death based on solid scriptural and patristic grounds.

To be sure, the author does not follow the usual stern academic style; he writes rather in a "lyrical" way, which inspires both scholars and laymen, and rightly so, for he deals with a subject which still remains a mystery. Thus he correctly entitles his book, *The Mystery of Death*. At a time when few people talk about death, when even Christian theologians hold vague concepts about life after death, the resurrection of the dead, and the existence or non-existence of the devil, and when scientists purposely ignore the impact of death on

our lives, a book such as this indeed fills a great gap. This is why it became an instant success and has been reprinted often. Hopefully, an English translation will be forthcoming.

Vasiliades approaches the subject with the fear of God and respect for the Holy Spirit, fully in command of both Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. He raises important questions which demand important answers. For example, how will the resurrection of the dead take place and when? When will the final and general judgment take place? Is there an eternal hell and punishment? What is paradise like? What is the nature of eschatology and the renewal of this world?

The author divides his book into thirty major chapters, together with a good introduction and bibliography. He discusses extensively how death entered into the world through original sin and the fall, and how death was transformed through God's love for our own good and benefit; he explores most efficiently the redeeming role of Christ's incarnation, and he points to Saint John Chrysostom who correctly says: "the death of the Lord put death to death"; and he successfully discusses the teaching of the Church concerning the Lord's descent into Hades.

Although for Christians death remains a mystery, and many still fear it, death and the expectation of death takes on a different meaning. Remaining a horrible and terrible mystery, as Saint John Chrysostom writes, death also brings about unspeakable joy because it transfers us to a brighter life, to the beginning of the everlasting delights of Paradise, and to the heavenly house of the Lord which is full of his incorruptible glory. As Saint Makarios puts it, the devil must lament, but not Christians who through death are led to eternal blessedness.

Here the importance of the "remembrance of death" must be stressed as contributing to spiritual development. Not only does it remind us of the equality of all people on earth with regard to death — for there is no distinction before it between the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor, and the just and the sinful — but it also helps make us better disciples of Christ, as Saint Ignatius of Antioch wrote in his letter to the Church of Rome.

Mr. Vasiliades also treats extensively the attitude of early and later Christians towards the dead. He describes the meaning of the beautiful funeral service of the Orthodox Church and speaks about memorial services which, according to patristic teaching, bring comfort to the dead as well as comfort to the living. Finally, the author speaks extensively of the resurrection of the dead, the general

judgment, and the transformation and renewal of the world. This is the "blessed Sabbath" which brings us to the mystical eighth day of creation, the endless day of the kingdom of God.

We must be grateful to Mr. Vasiliades for his beautiful and splendid book. Although it may not absolutely satisfy all scholars, he nonetheless has given us an outstanding study on one of the most difficult doctrines of the Church. The vast amount of source material that he has collected is impressive; his language is smooth; and his exposition clear and convincing. We are in great need of more books of this kind.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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*The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century.* By Georges Florovsky. Vol. 7 in *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky*. Trans. Catherine Edmunds. Belmont, MA: Notable and Academic Books, 1987, Pp. 274.

A number of writers lamented the demise of the Nordland Publishing Company some years ago, because it was an appropriate and prestigious outlet for their books and scholarly materials. But perhaps nothing was more tragic in the collapse of this publishing venture than the loss of promised volumes of Father Georges Florovsky's collected works, only five of which had appeared at the time of that collapse. Now, happily, Nordland's holdings are being distributed by an American agent for the parent German publishing firm, and subsequent volumes of Father Georges' works are slowly being released. One of these is his present book on the Eastern Fathers of the fourth century.

This book is prohibitive in price, which is very sad, considering the importance of a comprehensive volume of this kind. But the relative riches necessary to purchase the volume pale before the spiritual riches found in its pages. It begins with a brilliant, trenchant discussion of the theological features of the fourth century, pulling together patristic and philosophical trends and presuppositions into a clear outline that helps us to clarify even those concepts which we often think that we understand clearly, such as existence and essence along

dimensions of time and eternity and the mutability of nature and the limitless character of the Divine. In terse, laconic statements, Florovsky sweeps away naive suppositions about the philosophical bases of certain Eastern patristic notions, clearly differentiating the Fathers' use of philosophical categories and terminology from their ostensible enslavement to them. In fact, there emerges from this overview a distinct understanding of the Orthodox idea of the progressive revelation of dogma and truth, over and against the popular (and contrived) notion of "developed dogma." Unity of purpose and intent seems to draw the Fathers, even in this early age, into a consensual arena where heresy and deviation from Christian truth are not so much a problem of statement and interpretation as a problem in belief, conceptualization, and fidelity to the true Christian revelation. What some modern theological dilettantes see as "hair-splitting" over terms and as an impediment to dogmatic development in some fourth-century Fathers, Father Florovsky sees as an attempt to form a terminology capable of capturing the "consciousness of the faithful": "[The Fathers] . . . were trying to find and establish words that would be adequate to their conceptions of God and which would precisely express, and thus protect, the truths of their faith" (p. 35).

In his subsequent comments on Saint Athanasios, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem, Saint Basil, and nine other Fathers, amidst penetrating analyses of their views and philosophies, Father Georges returns again and again to the unifying theme of these Fathers: that of attempting to construct not a consistent belief from the presuppositions of certain philosophical systems, but a philosophical framework that might encompass and correctly express and protect the Christian faith, which rested, for them, not on subsequent development and refinement, but on the fullness of the ontological and metaphysical revelation of God and Christian wisdom as a theology of known and developed "facts." A beautiful illustration of this point is found in his comparison of the Alexandrian and Antiochian patristic schools, which are often characterized in modern scholarship and in the Western patristic schools as antithetical and inimical to one another. Father Georges clearly points out the differences in the approaches of the two schools, but convincingly and reasonably argues that, after all, there is a unity of goal and purpose in these Christian interpreters that rises above differences in style, methodology, and approach. He points out, too, that heretics such as Theodore of Mopsuestia (an extreme and

pernicious heretic who in contemporary times even some Orthodox have tried to defend as orthodox in his views and the victim of conviction *in absentia*) shaded the Antiochian school with an undeserved shadow that casts no real reflection on the Orthodox Antiochians and which tends to polarize the two Orthodox schools of Antioch and Alexandria in an artificial way.

Father Florovsky can be considered the "dean" of Orthodox theologians in the West, as several of his Harvard colleagues have characterized him. As such, it is only fitting that his works should be published in a lasting and appropriate form. The present volume is a good one, though the print is difficult and uncomfortable for the reader. And though the words of Father Florovsky abide in wisdom and his scholarship here is superb, the translation leaves more than just a bit to be desired. The English text is not loyal to the eloquence of the Russian. Nor do Father Florovsky's pious writing characteristics survive in translation. "Basil says," "both Gregory and Basil believe," and such expressions are neither typical of Father Florovsky nor found in his Russian volume. No doubt "Saint Gregory" or the "divine Basil" struck the translator as quaint niceties, unworthy of translation, when, in fact, they express Father Florovsky's constant loyalty to the rubrics of Orthodox patristic study, which include a stated and deliberate reverence for the Fathers — expressed in this case with pious titles and appellations.

Again, we regret that this text is so costly. It is a masterpiece of Orthodox theological writing by a master of Orthodox theology. Those of us who knew and benefited from the counsel of Father Florovsky during his last years at Princeton know that he considered his books on the early Orthodox Fathers to be his very best writings. We know, too, that he had hoped to improve the scholarly apparatuses in his collected works, something not completed before his death and not reflected in the present volume, which, annoyingly enough, has no valuable index. We must therefore rejoice at the publication of this volume and forthcoming ones, though with certain reservations about their not being the very best that might have come forth from a man who, in his Orthodox theological contributions, was the "very best."

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi and Gregory Telepneff  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*  
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*Modern Orthodox Saints*, Vol. 9, *St. Methodia of Kimolos*. By Constantine Cavarinos. Belmont, MA: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1987. Pp. 123, paper.

Professor Cavarinos' series on modern Greek saints is by now a classic. Each of the foregoing eight volumes has met with positive critical reviews, and without doubt the present volume will enjoy similar popularity and acclaim. The book has been produced in the format of other volumes in the series, handsomely and with copious aids to the reader. Not only is the index to Volume Nine complete and useful, but various maps and illustrations help us to know better the milieu in which the Saint Methodia struggled and attained to Christian perfection. Particularly helpful is an addendum to Saint Methodia's sayings which helps us to understand her spiritual advice in terms of related passages from Holy Scripture and from the writings of the Fathers of the Church. This addendum also gives us evidence that this holy woman, as is the case with all Orthodox saints, taught and guided others according to universal beliefs and precepts shared by all Orthodox teachers across the ages. Dr. Cavarinos' juxtaposition of the saint's sayings and these other materials is a particularly clever and effective way of making this point.

This book contains the life of Saint Methodia, a righteous nun who lived on the island of Kimolos, one of the Cyclades islands, and who reposed in our times (1908). From the biography and *akolouthia* (or service) to the saint composed by the Athonite monk Father Gerasimos Mikragiannanites, a famed Orthodox hymnographer, Cavarinos has presented us in English translation a beautiful commentary on this inspiring holy woman. The biography is translated in its entirety. Many beautiful excerpts from the *akolouthia* have been carefully selected and arranged by Dr. Cavarinos in such a way as to teach us a great deal about the saint's life and example. In his introductory remarks, Cavarinos draws on the recollections and writings of other sources, producing a saintly portrait which is well grounded in primary sources and which reflects the consensus of the secondary materials.

Professor Cavarinos also reproduces in translation a letter of the saint to her sister, Anna. This letter gives us clear insight into the simple, pious spirituality of Saint Methodia. Everywhere in the letter there is a sense of that passive and accepting faith that so characterizes our Orthodox saints. The saint advises her sister to live her life in preparation for death, tells her of the miraculous powers of

God, and speaks of no longer “owning” her self, but of having given her inner self over to the grace of God. Oddly enough, at the end of the letter the saint advises her sister not to destroy the letter, but to keep it as a souvenir. So it is today that we have this beautiful, charming piece of writing from a contemporary example of the ancient holiness of Orthodox life in Christ.

I have purposely not given details about the life of Saint Methodia in this review. This treasure of details I leave untouched for the reader. It is essential that Orthodox Christians and those who would wish to understand the essence of Orthodox Christianity begin their study of our Faith with readings from the lives of the saints. The ascent to Orthodoxy begins on the lowest rung of an intellectual ladder which leads us from the lives of the saints to the spiritual counsels of the Fathers (mostly contained in the writings of the desert Fathers and the ascetics) to the final and highest level of intellectual preparation for the spiritual understanding of Orthodoxy, the reading of spiritual theory such as that contained in the *Philokalia* and the theological writings of the Fathers of the Church. Without having stepped on this first rung, those who move up the second and third levels of spiritual reading find themselves ill-prepared, standing without firm footing, and precariously perched where they are not yet ready to rest. What Dr. Cavarnos has provided in these volumes on modern Orthodox saints is the foundation for all spiritual life. I need not elaborate on such a statement.

As I have noted, this book is very handsomely produced. Uncharacteristically, since Cavarnos’ books are usually meticulously prepared and carefully proofread, there are two or three typographical errors in this volume (e.g., on p. viii “send” should read “sent”). These are so few, that I am hard-pressed to note them. However, such instances are, again, so rare in the publications of the Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies that they seem somehow noteworthy when they do occur. Such notation should not compromise the excellence of this volume and the absolutely essential importance of this book for every Orthodox student and every student of Orthodox Christianity. This book should be on the top of everyone’s list of books to buy.

My warmest congratulations to Dr. Cavarnos for a superb contribution to Orthodox literature.

Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi  
*Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies*  
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*Death of Christendom and Birth of the Church.* By Pablo Richard. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987.

Since the fall of Constantinople (1453) and Moscow (1917) in the East, the symphonia model of Church-State relationships has had to be revised. Likewise, in the West, since the formation of the United States, the fall of Catholic France (1793) and Rome (1870), the medieval expectations for Church and Society have no longer been possible. The demise of these versions of "Christendom" have produced creative exploration of the patristic and biblical resources in the Apostolic Tradition in order to be faithful to the incarnational role of the Church in history. The confrontation of the Latin American Catholic Church with this challenge has only come more recently with the Second Vatican Council, and its affirmation of religious liberty. There are still those elements in the Latin American community who wish to perpetuate the alliance of the Church with the power of the State. This adjustment is at the very center of the liberation theology discussion.

In this book we have an analysis, from a particular theological point of view, of the emergence of the Church from its centuries of subordination to the State into the contemporary world. While to many readers the bulk of this book will appear sociological and even political, for those who claim a eucharistic/sacramental ecclesiology, the concrete forms the Church takes are a witness to the life of the Incarnation in history. For those wishing to understand the struggle of the Roman Catholic Church in the modern world, this book will be indispensable reading. For those wishing to understand the richness of theological and historical analysis needed in this transition, this book will be an invaluable introduction.

The book briefly surveys the development of Latin American from the domination of Spanish control of both society and Church to the transfer of this control to oligarchies within the Latin American countries and foreign interests in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century attempts to carve out new relationships. The author focuses on the more recent history since the Second Vatican Council in the attempts of Church and State to carve out new relationships. He provides more detailed case studies of the Church's response in Argentina and Brazil, which provide alternate paths toward settlement.



While the reader may not be so optimistic about the potential of the popular church, or about the balance between the active and the contemplative dimensions of Christian life, the analysis is essential if one is to understand the richness of the theological and social struggle going on within Latin American — and since Vatican involvement, worldwide — Catholicism today.

The developments of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Latin American Catholicism are not easily compared with those of the United States or Europe. However, a serious theological tradition is alive there with roots much older than the foundation of this country, and much more formed by classical Counter-Reformation Spanish concerns. The author of this volume is not able to treat in depth the ecclesiological, Christological, anthropological, and methodological work going on in Latin American theology. However, he does provide a clear introduction, and an historical and sociological analysis which makes these theological developments much clearer for the uninitiated reader. Whether or not one agrees with the analysis, the reader will be benefited by seeing firsthand the tools that are being brought to the renewal of the Christian faith in a continent full of hope and struggle.

Brother Jeffrey Gros, FSC

*A Christian Theology of the People Israel: A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality. Part 2.* By Paul M. Van Buren. New York: The Seabury Press, 1983. Pp. 362. \$28.85, cloth.

The present work is the second volume of a proposed four volume work on the Christian theology of the Jewish people. The first volume, *Discerning the Way*, served as a prolegomenon to the entire work.

The author is an Episcopal priest and professor of religious studies at Temple University. In the early sixties, Professor Van Buren created much excitement as a "death of God theologian" with his book, *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*. Apparently, in the 1980s, he has made a one-hundred and eighty degree about-face seeking to understand

the God and people of the Bible.

The purpose of the present work is to work out a theology of the reality of the people Israel, its own understanding of its relation with God, and the unbroken continuity of God's covenant through the ages to the present day. His definition of such a theology is dealing agonizingly with past unjust actions against Israel and the need for Christians to accept that "... Israel is indeed commissioned by God to be his witness before the world ..." (p. 21). Professor Van Buren also agonizes over the fact that Christian people not only rejected the Jews, the people of God, but through negative statements by theologians and preachers led to persecution and the holocaust.

The author stresses that the "promise" and the "covenant" that God made with Abraham is continued until today by the biblical canon of the Jewish people. He states that "what God began in choosing Abraham, he has continued and is yet continuing in Abraham's descendants, the Jewish people. What God began in Abraham, he is also continuing in raising up from the Gentiles a community, the Church, to be an auxiliary of his original election, and only in our days is it finally beginning to assume the cooperative role which it was designed to play alongside the people of his election" (p. 145). God "chose" the Jews "to be his people, to be holy as he is holy, to walk in his ways" (p. 157). The covenant continues because God is true and faithful to his word of promise. "God is faithful to his covenant with Israel; the covenant will endure and therefore the Jewish people have endured and will endure. But God has also shown his fidelity to choose the Gentiles who have heard and trusted God's promise to Israel, the Christian Church" (p. 178). Jesus Christ as God's purpose was to carry out the fullness of the promise he made to Abraham. Professor Van Buren notes that "Jesus as Israel is the goal, the telos of the Torah, for he is Israel effectively enlightening the Gentiles, so that all those who trust this new righteousness of God may be accepted by God" (p. 249).

For the Jews, Sinai is central, that is, "God gave Moses Torah — instruction — for the people of Israel," and Israel accepted God's Torah at Sinai and claims that "it was a definitive meeting of God with Israel as a people" (p. 153). Van Buren maintains that people of God remain such as long as they are faithful to his righteousness and that the "promise" and "covenant" God made with Abraham is indeed manifested today in the community of God as Church and Israel. The renewal of the covenant also affirms God's faithfulness

to both Jews and Christians. As to the question whether the "covenant" of God with the Jews has been abrogated, Professor Van Buren interprets the term "telos" as the goal rather than "terminus." So God's covenant with the Jews remains as God's bond with his people forever, though the traditional hermeneutical approach has been that the "telos" of the Law is also the abrogation of God's covenant with the Jews. Van Buren follows the interpretation of L. Gaston, who sees that Christ died "to accomplish" the goal of the Torah not only for Israel but also for the Gentiles. Though Paul regretted deeply that his fellow Jews did not accept "the new chapter in the story of Israel (p. 322), he did not claim that God rejected his people.

Van Buren strongly emphasizes the hatred and scorn for Jews as the "burden of the past." The world persecutes and continues to persecute God's people, and unfortunately the Church has taken the side of the world against the Jews. He points out that Jesus "did not in his lifetime, and has not since his resurrection, called his people Israel away from their life or fidelity to Torah, as their covenanted service to God, in order to enter the Gentile Church" (p. 350). The Jewish people remain God's own people.

The present work has many merits and deserves to be read by Christians and Jewish theologians to understand the need for a theology of the people Israel and God's continued covenant with them. However, the book contains some important contradictions.

I regret that the term "Gentile" is constantly used in reference to Christians and the Christian Church. Van Buren correctly states that "Gentiles and idolators have been synonymous in Israel's tradition . . . The Gentile, the non-Jew, was therefore assumed to be a worshiper of idols . . ." (p. 130). Even though he makes this definition, he continues to use the term to refer to the "Gentile Church" and "Gentile Christians." The term was used by Jews to distinguish themselves as monotheists from the pagan idol worshipers. If the Christian Church is recognized, as Professor Van Buren proposes, as emerging from the heart of Judaism, then these terms, "Gentile" or "idolators," must be excluded from any reference to the Church. The Christian view of God as Trinity does not detract from the monotheistic understanding of the God of the Scriptures. Israel, therefore, must not understand the Church as polytheistic or tritheistic. Also, the meaning of the following statement is unclear: "The Hellenization, not to speak of the Byzantinization, of the Church was the almost unavoidable price of the Christianization of the Hellenistic and Byzantine

worlds" (p. 323). This is an old Protestant thesis that has long since been debunked. It is unfortunate that Van Buren has held on to it.

I must also point out that at the end of the book he makes reference to the New Testament writings as the "Apostolic Writings." This adds to the confusion because the New Testament is accepted as Scripture by all Christians. The apostolic writings usually refer to the literature that chronologically follows the New Testament. Whatever the professor's purpose, this only adds to the confusion and increases the misunderstandings between Christians and Jews.

In this volume, however, the author does break new ground. Perhaps many of his positions are radical and may not be acceptable to some; nevertheless, all Christian theologians must do some hard thinking on the issues discussed in this book. In addition, modern critical methods for interpreting Scripture must be properly understood and used in the field of systematic theology.

Finally, the volume is well documented and provides a very useful "Glossary," references to Scripture, to apostolic and rabbinic writings as well as an index of names.

George S. Papademetriou

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*Theological Dialogue Between Orthodox and Reformed Churches.*  
By Thomas F. Torrance (ed.). Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press,  
1985. Pp. xxviii + 4158.

The present volume is a collection of essays presented at three Orthodox-Reformed Consultations in Istanbul and Geneva. The several papers by prominent theologians representing the Orthodox and Reformed traditions are published here for the benefit of those who work for the unity of all Christians.

The internationally famous scholar, Thomas F. Torrance, who edited the volume, provides a short history of the relations between the two churches in the Introduction. In addition, the Introduction includes proceedings of meetings, letters, and agreements reached at the meetings and dialogues between the two churches.

Included by Dr. Torrance are two memoranda that were read in Istanbul. In one he presents the spirit of the Reformed churches in a most penetrating way. Moreover, his wide knowledge of patristic

thought is quite impressive as is the depth of his knowledge of "Orthodoxy." He successfully argues that his church espouses both the "apostolic" and "catholic" tradition, and that "the Reformed Church interprets this apostolic tradition in agreement with and on the basis of the catholic theology of the Ecumenical Synods of the Undivided Church" (p. 3). His honest respect for Orthodoxy is stated as follows: "The Reformed Church honors the Greek Orthodox Church for its faithfulness to apostolic faith and practice and to the catholic theology of the Greek Fathers to which the whole Church of Christ in East and West is so deeply indebted" (p. 5). In a second memorandum, he discusses the development of patristic theology in East and West and offers useful criticism. Criticizing his own tradition, he says: "There are, of course, problems in Calvin's theology, to which we must not shut our eyes" (p. 13). And, according to him, the most obvious problem is that of predestination. Thanks to a proposal made by him, the succeeding two consultations that took place in Geneva discussed the doctrine of the Trinity.

Presentations at the Second Consultation in Geneva were made by the eminent scholars Emilianos Timiadis, Hans-Halmut Essen, Chrysostomos Constantinides, and Thomas F. Torrance. Each discussed the trinitarian doctrine from his own tradition. Timiadis, in his first paper, presented the Christian doctrine of divine immutability. He points out that the trinitarian God is one who acts in the personal affairs of the human person.

The second paper by Essen was on the authority of the Church according to the Reformed tradition. He discussed the contention that Christ is the sole authority and Lord of the Church, and pointed to the notion of *sola scriptura* as standing within the apostolic tradition. In his paper, Metropolitan Chrysostomos Constantinides agreed with Essen's first claim that "the teaching on authority in the Church relies on a Christocentric model of authority" (p. 58). However, he goes further and discusses the authority of the bishop, presbyter, and deacon within the Church as well as the role of the synods in proclaiming the truth.

The Third Consultation was also held in Geneva with papers presented by Torrance and Timiadis on the topic of the trinitarian faith of Christianity. In Torrance's paper, one finds a sound and profound presentation of the Orthodox doctrine of the Trinity based on such Church Fathers as Gregory the Theologian, Cyril of Alexandria, Athanasios the Great, John of Damascus, Gregory of Nyssa, and others.

Torrance states, "It is in this light that the historical tradition (*paradosis*) of the Faith, and true historical succession (*diadoche*) of presbyters and bishops from the Apostles, through which integrity of that tradition of the Faith is to be checked, is to be understood" (p.95). This paper is of great importance to the Orthodox because its author, of Reformed tradition, calls all Christians to the trinitarian faith of the Fathers and Synods.

Metropolitan Timiadis followed with his paper: "The Trinitarian Structure of the Church and its Authority." The author calls Christians to "theosis," that is, to unite with God. He interprets theosis to mean that "such a union with the Trinity means union with the divine energies, not the divine essence" (p. 128). This distinction between energies and essence is one of the most misunderstood doctrines of Orthodoxy held by Western churches, both Protestant and Roman Catholic.

The volume concludes with an "Agreed Understanding of the Theological Development and Eventual Direction of the Orthodox/Reformed Conversations Leading to Dialogue."

This collection of papers by the Orthodox and Reformed churches should, I believe, become a model for future conversations between Christians of the East and the West. The faith of the Fathers on the Holy Trinity is of utmost importance to Orthodox Christians, and is an excellent point to initiate discussions aimed at closing the gap of doctrinal differences. Any hope for unity of Christians must be based on the true faith of God as Trinity.

George C. Papademetriou

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*ABBAKOYM O ANYPIOΔHTOΣ* [*Avvakoum the Barefoot*]. By Theodoretos the Hagiorite Monk. Holy Mountain (Greece): 1985. Pp. 70, paper.

Holy men have always been present in the Orthodox Church since the time of Christ. The present book is a biography of a contemporary holy man who lived, breathed, and proclaimed the message of the Gospel his entire life.

Avvakoum, a simple and unlettered man from Syme of the Dodecanese Islands, was born into a pious family in 1894. His name was

Antonios Gaitanos. His father, like most men of the island, was a sponge diver. The young boy was always close to the Church where he served as altar boy and later as chanter. He also learned the art of icon painting.

At the age of eighteen he had a vision of Saint Phanourios and he single-handedly built a church in his honor on his native island.

At the age of twenty-five he decided to go to Jerusalem and become a monk at the Saint Savvas Monastery. However, he did not obtain a visa from the English Consulate in Rhodes and so was not allowed to disembark at Joppa. Consequently, through Alexandria, he went to Crete. There he worked until someone suggested that he go to Mount Athos to become a monk. In 1920, at the age of twenty-six, he arrived by boat at the Great Lavra Monastery on Mount Athos. There he remained the rest of his life. As a monk he took the name Avvakoum.

Avvakoum served tables as part of his ministry and for over seven years was a nurse in the hospital. However, his primary ministry was to "pray without ceasing" and to teach the multitude of pilgrims that came to him.

Avvakoum was a child at heart. He loved all people and talked to all with the innocence of a child. All he wanted to do in life was to pray and live the life in Christ. He had no worldly ambitions; he only sought to live in peace in the presence of Christ.

This simple, unlettered monk had a charismatic personality and a phenomenal memory. He could recite from memory long passages from the Scriptures and the Church Fathers. He would preach for hours, always citing long biblical and patristic illustrations.

Numerous visitors went to see him, including professors, bishops, theology students, clergy, and others from all over the world. The well-known professor Nicholas Louvaris visited him with a German professor, Erhart Vastner, who reports the occasion in his book *Die Stundentrommel von Heiligen Berg Athos*. Professor Louvaris believed Avvakoum knew more than a university professor. He is also reported in Constantine Cavarinos' book *Anchored in God*.

In a response to the question, "How will God judge the good people who are unbaptized?," Avvakoum replied, "Nothing is lost. Neither the good person who does good loses nor the unbaptized . . . God will judge all people in accordance to the actions dictated by the written law of God in the human heart" (p. 56). Another visitor was Professor John Karmiris who said: "Divine grace has filled him with

boundless memory, such that I never heard before nor shall I ever witness in the future" (p. 54).

The saintly Father Avvakoum died in June, 1978, leaving behind him a great spiritual legacy. A judge who wrote the epilogue to the present book and knew this holy man since 1933 extolls Avvakoum's purity and holiness.

The biography was written, the author informs us, not to praise Father Avvakoum but to teach the younger monks and the world the true Orthodox tradition of prayer and spiritual life. It is indeed good to know that the tradition of the desert Fathers lives on today on Mount Athos. This simple monk who walked barefooted except to church and to the *synodikon*, taught us that the Holy Spirit is present in the world today.

The book is well written with numerous pictures of Mount Athos and Father Avvakoum and contains a message for all people today. It should be translated into English for it deserves a broader audience.

George C. Papademetriou  
*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*



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Dionne, J. Robert. *The Papacy and the Church: A Study of Praxis and Reception in Ecumenical Perspective*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1987. Pp. 524. \$29.95 cloth.

*Ἐκκλησία καὶ Θεολογία*. Volumes 7-8 (1986-87). London: Thyateira House, 1987. Pp. 802. Paper.

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Methodios, Archbishop of Thyateira and Great Britain. *Θεολογικαὶ καὶ ἱστορικαὶ μελέται· Συλλογὴ δημοσιευμάτων. Volume Ten. Συμβολὴ εἰς τὴν ἱστορίαν τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας ἐν Δυτικῇ καὶ Κεντρικῇ Εὐρώπῃ. Ἡ Ρωσικὴ Ἐκκλησία*. Athens: n.p., 1987. Pp. 479. Paper.

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Sedgwick, Timothy F. *Sacramental Ethics: Paschal Identity and the Christian Life*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987. Pp. 118. Paper.

Sullivan, Denis F. *The Life of Saint Nikon. Text, Translation and Commentary*. The Archbishop Iakovos Library of Ecclesiastical and Historical Sources, Number 14. Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1987. Pp. 314. \$23.95, cloth; \$16.95, paper.

Theodorou, Evangelos. *Ἐντυώσεις ἐκ τῆς Ἱερᾶς Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Βορείου καὶ Νοτίου Ἀμερικῆς· Στὰ πλαίσια τῆς ΚΖ' Κληρικολαϊκῆς Συνελεύσεως*. Athens: Ekklesia, 1986. Pp. 213. Illustrated. Paper.

Trakatellis, Bishop Demetrios. *Authority and Passion: Christological Aspects of the Gospel according to Mark*. Translated from the Greek by George K. Duvall and Harry Vulopas. Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987. Pp. 245. \$23.95, cloth; \$15.95, paper.

Vlachos, Archimandrite Hierotheos. *Ἡ Ἀποκάλυψη τοῦ Θεοῦ*. Thebes: Holy Monastery of the Birth of the Theotokos (Pelagias), 1987. Pp. 172. Paper.

von Wartenberg-Potter, Bärbel. *We Will Not Hang Our Harps on the Willows. Encouragement and Spirituality*. The Risk Book Series. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1986. Pp. 123. Paper.

Wingenbach, Gregory C. *Broken, Yet Never Sundered: Orthodox Witness and the Ecumenical Movement*. Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987. Pp. 184. \$12.95, paper.

# DIALOGUES IN A MONASTERY

BY

CONSTANTINE TSATSOS

Translated from the Greek by Jean Demos  
with a Preface by John Brademas

Teacher, public servant, man of action, poet, philosopher, statesman — the career of Constantine Tsatsos reached its highest point, when, in 1975, he became the First President of the Hellenic Republic. The dynamism of his mind and spirit had not been diminished by coercion and repression. When Greece emerged from the dark years of military dictatorship, he was ready with a work expressing the values which had sustained action and thought throughout his life.

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Commission in Faith and Order. *Minutes of the Meeting of the Standing Commission 1986 Held at the Hottbauer-Stiftung Potsdam, GDR, 13-20 July 1986*. Faith and Order. Paper No. 134. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986. Pp. 59, soft.

Metropolitan Damaskenos (ed.). *Orthodoxie et Mouvement Ecuménique*. Chambèsy-Geneve: Centre Orthodoxe du Patriarchat oecuménique, 1986. Pp. 228, soft.

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E. Glen Hinson (ed. and trans.). *Understandings of the Church*. Source of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1986. Pp. 166, soft.

Gordon Lathrop and Gail Rainshaw-Schmidt (eds.). *Lectionary for the Christian People. Cycle A of the Roman Episcopal, Lutheran Lectionaries. Revised Standard Version Texts Emended*. N.p.: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1986. Pp. 265. \$ 15.00, soft.

Gennadios Limouris (ed.). *Church, Kingdom, Word: The Church as Mystery and Prophetic Sign*. Faith and Order Paper no 130. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1987. Pp. 209. \$ 11.50, soft.

Isidora Rosenthal-Kamarinea. *Hellenika: Jahrbuch für die Freunde Griechenlands* 1986. Pp. 278, soft.

Charles Kannengiesser (ed.), trans. Pamela Bright. *Early Christian Spirituality. Sources of Early Christian Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986. Pp. 119, soft.

Francis Kelly Nemeck, OMI and Marie Theresa Coombs, Hermit. *The Spiritual Thresholds and Stages of Adult Spiritual Genesis*. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987. Pp. 232. \$ 8.95, soft.

Elias Mastrogiannopoulos. *Ἀναγεννητικὸ Κίνημα· Παραφυσάδες τῶν Κολλυβάδων*. Athens: Zoe, 1986. Pp. 107, soft.

Jaroslav Pelikan. *Jesus through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*. New York: Harper + Row, 1987. Pp. 270. \$ 8.95, soft.

Theodore Stylianopoulos and S. Mark Heim (eds.). *Spirit of Truth: Ecumenical Perspective on the Holy Spirit*. Brookline, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1986. Pp. 197. \$10.95, soft.

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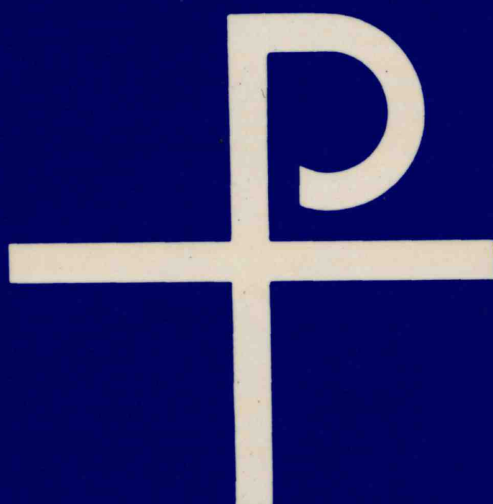
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for the

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Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, Hellenic College

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*The Greek Orthodox Theological Review* is published quarterly, in March, June, September, and December by the Holy Cross Orthodox Press for the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology/Hellenic College.

The GOTR publishes papers and reviews in the fields of Theology, Biblical Studies, Church History, Byzantine History, and related classical, archaeological, and philosophical studies.

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Ideas and opinions expressed in articles and reviews appearing in the *Review* are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the ideas and opinions of the editors, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology/Hellenic College, or the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

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## Editor's Note

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ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF HOLY Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, we would like to express our thanks to the Hierarchs of the Church who have been associated with Holy Cross either as Administrators, Faculty, or Students.

For those who have fallen asleep in the Lord, we pray: “Αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη αὐτῶν — May their memory be eternal.”

†Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople  
†Archbishop Athenagoras (Kavadas) of Thyateira  
Archbishop Iakovos of the Americas  
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Bishop Soterios of Toronto  
Bishop Demetrios of Vresthena  
Bishop Athanasios of the Patriarchate of Antioch  
Bishop Athenagoras of Dorylaion







The ecumenical role played by the Ecumenical Patriarchate within the ecumenical movement is duly stressed.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
Chalke, Turkey

*Κείμενα Διορθοδόξων καὶ Διαχριστιανικῶν Σχέσεων* [*Documents on Inter-Orthodox and Inter-Christian Relations*]. By Antonios Papadopoulos. Thessalonike: Kyriakides Brothers, 1984. Pp. 159, soft.

This is a companion volume to Professor Papadopoulos' book on the ecumenical movement. Here he classifies the documents he reviews under three headings: 1) encyclicals of the Ecumenical Patriarchate (1902-1904, 1920, 1952, 1973); 2) Orthodox Statements deriving from the following Ecumenical Conferences: Lausanne (1927), Edinburgh (1937), Lund (1952), Evanston (1954), and New Delhi (1961); and 3) Inter-Orthodox Conferences: Mount Athos (1930), Rhodes (1961), and the First Pre-Synodal Pan-Orthodox Conference at Chambesey (1976).

The author relies heavily on the works of Professors Ioannes Karmires, Ioannes Kalogerou, and Vasil T. Istavridis who have made major contributions in the field of ecumenical studies.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
Chalke, Turkey

*Ἡ Ὁρθόδοξη Αὐτοκέφαλη Ἐκκλησία τῆς Ἀλβανίας* [*The Autocephalous Church of Albania*]. By Apostolos Glavinas. Thessalonike: Office of Publications, University of Thessalonike, 1985. Pp. 163, soft.

Professor Glavinos is the leading authority on the history of the Albanian Orthodox Church about which he has published many studies. The present work is based on all of his former studies.

In the Introduction, he reviews the history of the Albanians, followed by an account of their efforts to establish an autocephalous church and receive canonical recognition from the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which they achieved in 1937. The book ends with a review of the present situation, that of suppression in 1967 by the atheistic state of Albania.

Vasil T. Istavrides  
Chalke, Turkey

*Ίστορία τῆς Σερβικῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Πανεπιστημιακαὶ Παραδόσεις* [*History of the Serbian Church, University Lectures*]. 2nd ed. By Ioannes Tarnanides. Thessalonike: Kyriakides Brothers, 1985. Pp. 223, soft.

Professor Tarnanides considers the history of the Orthodox Church of Serbia to have begun in the first half of the thirteenth century. Nonetheless, he begins his treatment of that history with the coming of the Serbians to the Balkans in the seventh century and carries it toward the present. Before tracing the efforts made for their Christianization however, the author also reviews the Serbs' religious beliefs before their acceptance of Christianity.

In a subdivision entitled "The Schismatic Church of the Southern Diocese of the Patriarchate of Serbia," the author deals with the schismatic church of Macedonia whose autocephaly has not been recognized by the other Orthodox Churches.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
Chalke, Turkey

*Ἀρχεῖον τῆς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς τῆς Μεγάλης τοῦ Χριστοῦ Ἐκκλησίας — Ἱερᾶς Θεολογικῆς Σχολῆς Χάλκης — Σχολαρχία Μητροπολίτου Σταυρουπόλεως Κωνσταντίνου (Τυπάλδου-Ἰακωβάτου), 1844-1864, τόμος Α'. Γράμματα Πατριαρχικά καὶ Ἀπαντήσεις τῆς Σχολαρχίας* [The Archives of the Theological School of the Great Church of Christ — the Theological School of Chalke — "Scholarchia" of the Metropolitan of Stavroupolis Constantine (Typaldos-Iakovatos) 1844-1864, Volume 1, Patriarchal Letters and Answers of the "Scholarchia"] By George D. Metallinos and Barbara G. Metallinos. Athens: n.p., 1985. Pp. 319, soft.

The authors of the above study begin their work by arranging and classifying the documents found in the archives of the museum and library of the Typaldos-Iakovatos' mansion in Kephallonia in 1966.

These documents, considered among the best private collections in Greece, refer to the history of Kephallonia, the neighboring islands, the Ionian Academy, the Theological School of Chalke, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and Greece itself. Their special importance for the history of the Ecumenical Patriarchate must be stressed.

Upon his retirement, the first director (scholarches) of the Theological School of Chalke, Metropolitan Constantine of Stavroupolis

(Constantine Typaldos-Iakovatos, 1844-1864), took with him the archives of the School and brought them to his native island. On the other hand, the efforts spent by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the Theological School of Chalke to retrieve these documents were not fruitful.

The present volume covers the correspondence between the Ecumenical Patriarchs of the time and Metropolitan Constantine on matters related to the newly established Theological School of Chalke.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
Chalke, Turkey

*Οί Σχέσεις μεταξύ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἀρχιεπισκοπῆς Βορείου καί Νοτίου Ἀμερικῆς καί τῆς Ἐκτός Ρωσίας Ρωσικῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Ἐκκλησίας στίς Ἡνωμένες Πολιτεῖες κατά τή Χρονική Περίοδο 1921-1971* [*The Relationship between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia in the U.S. between the Years 1921-1971*]. By Thomas FitzGerald. Thessalonike: n.p., 1985. Pp. 263, soft.

The author is a Greek Orthodox priest and a professor at the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology/Hellenic College. He submitted the present study in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of doctor of theology at the Aristoteleian University of Thessalonike.

He sets out to examine the relationship between the above mentioned ecclesiastical jurisdictions. The development of Orthodox Christianity in North America between the years 1794-1930 is discussed in the first part of the book (pp. 39-96). The second part includes the study on the origins of the Russian Orthodox churches in the same area (pp. 97-149), while part three investigates the relations between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese and the Synod Abroad in the U.S. between the years 1930-1971 (pp. 151-252).

The author notes that Orthodoxy entered the USA from two directions: 1) from the Russian mission in Alaska, and 2) from the East, with the constant influx of emigrants from Europe and the Middle East. The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and the Russian Orthodox Churches are the author's special focus.

The movement of the Russian Orthodox faithful from their

motherland to different parts of the world in the last two centuries is a fascinating phenomenon, resulting in four ecclesiastical jurisdictions: 1) the Russian Orthodox Synod Abroad, 2) the Archdiocese of the Orthodox Russian communities of Western Europe under the Ecumenical Patriarchate, 3) the Metropolia (The Orthodox Church in America), and 4) the Russian Orthodox communities under the Russian Orthodox Church of Moscow.

The efforts of three Greek Orthodox Archbishops of America, Athenagoras (1930-1948), Michael (1949-1958), and Iakovos (1959-) are especially noted in the domain of inter-Orthodox relations, and especially in the relations of the Greek Archdiocese of North and South America and the Russian Orthodox Synod Abroad in the USA.

Vasil T. Istavridis  
*Chalke, Turkey*

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## Books Received

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Joseph J. Allen. *The Ministry of the Church: Image of Pastoral Care*. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986. Pp. 232.

Mother M. Angelica with Christine Allison. *Mother Angelica's Answers, Not Promises: Straightforward Solutions to Life's Puzzling Problems*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987. Pp. 275. \$14.95, cloth.

Anonymous. *Μιά βραδυά στην έρημο του Ἁγίου Ὁρους (Συζήτηση με έρημίτη γιά τήν εὐχή)*. 6th ed. Illustrated. Edessa (Greece): Holy Monastery of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, 1986. Pp. 179, cloth.

Matthew Baasten. *Pride According to Gregory the Great: A Study of the Moralia*. Studies in the Bible and Early Christianity Volume 7. Lewiston, ME: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987. Pp. 206, cloth.

Samuele Bacchiocchi. *Women in the Church. A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church*. Biblical Perspectives 7. Forewords by Wayne Gruden and James B. Hurley. Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1987. Pp. 295. \$12.95, paper.

Georges Barrois (ed. and trans.). *The Fathers Speak: St. Basil the Great, St. Gregory Nazianzus, St. Gregory of Nyssa. Selected Letters and Life-records*. Foreword by John Meyendorff. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986. Pp. 225, paper.

John Breck, *The Power of the Word in the Worshiping Church*. Illustrations. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986. Pp. 237, paper.

St. John Chrysostom. *On Marriage and Family Life*. Trans. Catherine P. Roth and David Anderson. Intro. Catherine P. Roth. Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986. Pp. 114, paper.

Archimandrite Chrysostomos. *The Ancient Fathers of the Desert—2*. Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1987. Pp. 90. \$5.95, paper.

Leonard Doohan. *The Laity. A Bibliography*. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987. Pp. 159. \$8.95, paper.

Ernest Falardeau, S.S.S. *One Bread and Cup. Source of Communion*. Theology and Life Series 19. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987. Pp. 134. \$8.95, paper.

International Thracian Conference. *The Bronze Age in the Thracian Lands and Beyond*. Illustrated. [Milan] Dragan European Foundation, 1986. Pp. 406.

A. Jensen. *Die Zukunft der Orthodoxie Konzilspläne und Kirchenstrukturen*. Foreword by Metropolitan Damaskenos. Zurich: Benziger Verlag, 1986. Pp. 384. DM 88, paper.

Paul Varo Martinson. *A Theology of World Religions: Interpreting God, Self, and World in Semitic, Indian, and Chinese Thought*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987. Pp. 272, cloth.

Chrysanthi Mavropoulou-Tsioumi. *The Church of St. Nicholas Orphanos*. Thessalonike: Institute for Balkan Studies, 1986. Pp. 49 + 40 plates, paper.

Herbert McCabe, O.P. *The Teaching of the Catholic Church: A New Catechism of Christian Doctrine*. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1986. Pp. 80, paper.

Georgios Metallenos. *Ὁρθοδοξία καὶ ἐλληνικότητα. Προσεγγίσεις στὴ Νεοελληνικὴ ταυτότητα*. Athens: Menyma, 1987. Pp. 217, cloth.

Józef Mysków. *Zagadnienia Apologetyczne*. Warsaw: Catholic Theological Academy, 1986. Pp. 338, paper.

*The Order of the Divine and Holy Liturgy. Διάταξις τῆς θείας καὶ ἱερᾶς Λειτουργίας*. Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987. Pp. viii + 94. \$15.95, cloth. \$12.95, vinyl.

Norman Pittenger. *The Pilgrim Church and the Easter People*. Theology and Life Series 20. Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987. Pp. 112. \$8.95, paper.

John S. Pobee. *Who are the Poor? The Beatitudes as a Call to Community*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1987. Pp. 71, paper.

Jan Olof Rosenquist. *The Life of St. Irene Abbess of Chrysobalanton. A Critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes and Indices*. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 1. Uppsala: Uppsala University, 1986. Pp. 175. SEK 139, paper.

Janis Rozentals. *The Promise of Eternal Life. Biblical Witness to Christian Hope*. Foreword by Alvin N. Rogness. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1987. Pp. 109, paper.

Panagiotes N. Simontas. *Νικήτα Σεΐδου Σύνοψις τῆς Ἀγίας Γραφῆς κατὰ τὸν ὑπ. ἀριθ. 483 κώδικα τῆς Ἐθνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκης τῆς Ἑλλάδος*. Thessalonike: Patriarchal Institute for Patristic Studies, 1984. Pp. 323 + 8 plates, cloth.

Masao Takenaka. *God is Rice: Asian Culture and Christian Faith*. The Risk Book Series. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986. Pp. 83, paper.

Démètre Théraios. *Le malaise chrétien: Archétypes marxistes de la théologie de libération*. Geneva-Paris: Georg-O.E.I.L., 1987. Pp. 380, paper.

Constantine Tsatsos. *Dialogues in a Monastery*. Brookline: Hellenic College Press, 1987. Pp. xiv + 182. \$10.95, paper. \$15.95, cloth.

Frieda S. Upson. *Constantine the Great*. Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1987. Pp. viii + 358. \$5.95, paper.

Hierotheos K. Vlachos. *Τό μυστήριον τῆς παιδείας τοῦ Θεοῦ*. Edessa (Greece): Holy Monastery of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, 1985. Illustrated. Pp. 75, cloth.

Hierotheos K. Vlachos. *Ὁρθόδοξη ψυχοθεραπεία (πατερική θεραπευτική ἀγωγή)*. 2nd ed. Edessa (Greece): Holy Monastery of the Elevation of the Holy Cross, 1987. Pp. 335, cloth.

Hierotheos S. Vlachos. *Μαρτυρία Ζωῆς. Ὁ Μητροπολίτης Ἐδέσσης, Πέλλης καὶ Ἀλμωπίας Καλλίνικος*. Illustrated. N.p.: Holy Metropolis of Aitolia and Akarnania, 1985. Pp. 286, paper.

Jan L. Womer (ed. and trans.) *Morality and Ethics in Early Christianity*. Sources of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987. Pp. 135, paper.



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*Angela C. Hero  
Introduction by John Meyendorff*

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*George Mastrantonis*

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specific points of biblical exegesis." These letters "speak far more directly to the reader than do his longer treatises." Also, they "show Cyril in his role as church-politician, fierce in his initial campaign against Nestorios, willing in victory, if not to compromise (that he would never do), at any rate to attempt an honest peace with men of good will." In general, the texts published here are well chosen to "reveal the man and his characteristic attitudes as well as his message." (pp. xi-xii) From all these points of view Cyril's *Select Letters* is really a representative selection of his work, a well-chosen and well-balanced harvest out of his vast field of writings.

In retrospect, the book of L. R. Wickham, *Cyril of Alexandria Select Letters*, is an illuminating and authoritative study, full of deep observations and sharp insights into the theological discussions of the fifth century A.D. in Byzantium. It produces a vivid portrait of Cyril and a penetrating interpretation of his acts and ideas, stating clearly his great virtues without overlooking his defects. Finally, the work is an important contribution regarding the dogmatic controversy between Cyril and Nestorios, and definitely useful for future research in the field.

Costas M. Prousis  
Hellenic College

*The Greek Way of Death.* By Robert Garland. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985. Pp. xvi + 192. 27 figures. Cloth, \$22.50.

Death is both a popular and an unpopular subject, but one thing is for certain: it is an unavoidable subject, the study of which can provide us with invaluable insights into a particular society's attitude toward life and the living. Robert Garland has written a brief but exemplary study about what the ordinary Greeks felt about death and the dead from the time of Homer to the fourth century B.C. The archaeological evidence (a great deal of it problematic) and the literary evidence (Homer, the tragedians, and the Attic orators particularly) have been examined for what they can tell us about the relation of the living to the dead. In the author's own words:

This book is an attempt to revive and re-live the complex texture of feelings provoked in the living by the dead as moment by moment the two shift ground in relation to one another. Hence, where possible, I have tried to concern myself not merely with the facts about Greek death (i.e. the observances), but also with the psychological context of the facts (i.e. the attitudes behind the observances). Where this is not possible I hope that detailed description may help to build up a representation of the visual and aural effect of Greek burial rites, which itself is significant to the understanding of attitude. Thus the questions which lie at the heart of this book are as follows: the extent to which death was a preoccupying concern among the Greeks; the kind of feelings with which the ordinary Greek anticipated his own death; the nature and quality of the bonds affiliating the living to the dead; and, finally, the kind of light shed by Greek burial practices upon characteristic elements in Greek society (p. xiii).

There are a number of fine books dealing with specific aspects of Greek burial customs and aspects of death in Greek written sources, but not since Erwin Rohde's monumental and classic *Psyche* (1897) have we had a book that has attempted to bring together in a single place archaeological, anthropological, and literary evidence to present a systematic survey of Greek beliefs, rituals, and practices about death, the dead, the "other" world, and the living. Garland's seven chapters are a model of precision and conciseness and at the same time give us updated, reasoned information and interpretation on "The Power and Status of the Dead"; "Dying"; "The Funeral"; "Between Worlds"; "Life in Hades"; "The Special Dead"; and "Visiting the Tomb" — all well supported by a chronology of Greek burial, a glossary, notes, a bibliography, a general index, and an index locorum, and relevant illustrations.

*The Greek Way of Death* is not a morbid study; it is a fascinating book that confirms the anthropocentric view that the Greeks were "this world" oriented; that they preferred life over death; that they believed that there was a right time and a right place to die. The Greeks were not apprehensive about death and their *joie de vivre* view of life certainly colored their view of Hades as a dreary place and one generally free from terrors. Still, it was the obligation of every Athenian citizen to see to it that the dead were properly taken care of. Expressions of grief may have changed over the centuries but the

concern for the dead remained consistently persistent.

*The Greek Way of Death* shows how fruitful scholarly research in archaeology, anthropology, and literature can be brought to bear upon a subject that is fundamental for the understanding of an ancient people whose art, history, and literature have long been acknowledged as interesting and creative examples of a highly civilized society.

John E. Rexine  
Colgate University

GREEK ORTHODOX THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

Volume 32, No. 2, 1987

*St. Athanasius: Contra Apollinarem.* By George Dion Dragas. Introduction by Thomas F. Torrance. Volume 6. Athens: Church and Theology, 1985. Pp. 632. Paper.

I read this book with joy, gratitude, and a sense of relief: here at last is a scholarly presentation of the Christology of Saint Athanasios in all its richness and vitality. As a student of the Fathers, I have long been convinced that the view of Athanasian Christology to be found in several of the most popular modern manuals of patrology was seriously distorted. On this view, which originated in nineteenth-century German Liberal Protestantism, there is a kind of latent Apollinarianism in Saint Athanasios. He uses the Logos/flesh scheme to describe the Incarnation (the Word takes "flesh," "a body"), and even though he does not deny the completeness of our Lord's humanity, he is disinterested in his human soul; in the words of one author, Saint Athanasios attaches no "theological importance" to it. Now an obvious rejoinder would be to point to the two anti-Apollinarian treatises traditionally attributed to Saint Athanasios. Unfortunately, the proponents of the textbook view, following one sceptical strand of criticism, reject Athanasian authorship of these works. The argument is maddeningly circular: Athanasios did not write the anti-Apollinarian treatises, therefore there is no reason for doubting the Apollinarian tendency in his Christology; there is something Apollinarian about his Christology, therefore we can be sure he did not write the anti-Apollinarian treatises! This fallacious theory has now been definitively refuted by Father George Dragas, who at the same time

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Sabbath'' which brings us to the mystical eighth day of creation, the endless day of the Kingdom of God.

We must be grateful to Mr. Vasiliades for his beautiful and splendid book. Although it may not absolutely satisfy all he nonetheless has given us an outstanding study on one of the most difficult doctrines of the Church. The vast amount of source material that he has collected is impressive; his language is smooth; and his exposition clear and convincing. We are in great need of more books of this kind.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

*The Church, the Liturgy and the Soul of Man: The Mystagogia of Saint Maximos the Confessor*, translated with Historical Note and Commentaries by Dom Julian Stead, O.S.B. Still River, Ma, St. Bede's Publications, 1982. Pp. 121. \$6.95, paper.

Thanks to Dom Julian Stead, we have a useful and good translation of the celebrated book of Saint Maximos the Confessor under the title *Mystagogia*. Mr. Stead offers a short historical note concerning Saint Maximos where he calls him one of the great Fathers of the Church. He is right in emphasizing the considerable influence Saint Maximos exerted on the spiritual and mystical life of the Church, and he correctly points to Maximos' strict devotion to Orthodox doctrine during the Monothelite controversy.

The author's commentaries are lucid and interesting, although one may question his inclusion of Aristotle and his pondering on ecumenism. I agree with him however that no one can find the lowest common denominator of faith leading us to unity in Maximos' work. On the contrary, true unity would be the result of true faith and love in an oneness of thought, will, and mind under the kinship of God the Word. Statements like, "The Church is not exactly God's incarnation" (p. 19) or "I do not know how concerned the United Nations is with it — that is unity with God" (p. 20) sound a little strange and may be misunderstood.

The commentary on the "Soul, Contemplation, and the Union with God," needs a good psychological background and should be carefully read. The commentary on the "Image of Man" is most successful, and it gives a good insight into Saint Maximos' anthropology in its proper theological and liturgical framework.

Finally, the text of the *Mystagogia* itself is the great contribution of this book and should be highly appreciated. The translation of the original text from Migne (PG 91) is well done without sterility of style, but with apparent effusion of the contemplative language of Saint Maximos. Indeed, by reading Saint Maximos' *Mystagogia* one becomes acquainted with the liturgical life of his times (sixth-seventh centuries) as well as with the wonderful, allegorical, and spiritual interpretation of the Divine Liturgy. For instance, at the First Entrance we separate ourselves from all the confusion and delusions of the outside world. The reading of the Holy Gospel declares the believers' utter rejection of the premordial error, and the reception of the holy, life-giving sacrament proclaims our future adoption as sons, the goodness of our God . . . and the deification which will come without exception to all the worthy.

The author must be congratulated for his splendid effort to make Saint Maximos' work accessible in a good and useful translation.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

G O T R 32 (87)

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*Freedom in Mission: An Ecumenical Inquiry, a Perspective of the Kingdom of God.* By Emilio Castro. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1985. Pp. 352. \$12.95, paper.

"What is the missionary obedience that corresponds to our past history, to our present awareness and to the demands of the kingdom, as we read the Bible today?" So, Emilio Castro writes in his introductory paragraphs of his own answer "Freedom in Mission: An Ecumenical Inquiry." Because of the nature of his query, one has to wonder whether a resolve can ultimately be reached. While there are numerous works on mission this is the only current examination which attempts a critical assessment of the topic from an ecumenical understanding of the kingdom of God. Prior to its appearance we have had only sketches found in lone articles throughout the limitless boundaries of ecumenical spheres. The Rev. Dr. Emilio Castro, fourth General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, has produced an exemplary theological study that attempts to give the critical reader

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*Faith's Answer: The Mystery of Jesus.* By Vittorio Messori. Trans. Kenneth D. Whitehead and ed. Eugene M. Brown. New Rochelle, NY: Don Bosco Publications, 1986. Pp. 299.

In his short preface, the author openly and clearly states that his book about Jesus is different. It is different because it is about a long journey of faith in order to find an answer to the perennial question about the "mystery of Jesus." Although the author claims that he professes the Christian faith without apology, in reality, the nature of the book is "apologetical." The author combines a good working knowledge of the Scriptures — although not a biblical scholar himself — together with a good knowledge of history and archeology in order to prove that Jesus Christ is God regardless of the fact that the "mystery" about him will remain forever.

A journalist by training, Messori specializes in religious topics, and thus he could not avoid the journalistic style in his presentation. He divides his book into nine basic chapters with only eight footnotes and a short bibliography.

One must express admiration for the convincing argumentation which Mr. Messori derives from history and biblical theology. He correctly postulates that Jesus is the only man in human history about whom it has been claimed that he returned from beyond death. The author informs us that he came to three basic conclusions: 1) as far as Jesus is concerned, the search is well worth the effort of proving his historical presence on earth; 2) it must be admitted that there are things that go beyond reason; and 3) it is a sound, reasonable posture to place one's bet on the hypothesis that Jesus is genuine.

Messori is aware of the intricacies of biblical criticism, of the tremendous efforts and the perennial debates to prove or disprove the historicity of Jesus, and of the dramatic attempt of Christians and non-Christians alike to understand and explain the mystery which surrounds the divinity of Jesus Christ. To his aid he brings the Old Testament, especially the prophets, Flavius Josephus, and the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls. His conclusion is that the facts of history bear witness to the truth of the words which the gospels have Jesus proclaim at the outset of his mission: "This is the time of fulfillment. The reign of God is at hand" (Mk 1.15). Then he faces the "mythological" theories about Jesus according to which early Christians, in becoming Christians, transferred to Christ their faith, thus transforming him into a god, a practice not unknown among the Near

East peoples. Jesus then became progressively humanized, and the Jesus of history is nothing but a construct of the Christ of faith. If we add here the argument that the gospels are for the most part legendary since they are filled with miracles and with the supernatural, then we can understand the predicament of both the sophisticated and unsophisticated Christian. The author replies that the solution of this problematic lies precisely on faith, and that the New Testament books are documents of faith. He compares the evangelists with modern newspaper or magazine editors, who have the task to make choices, synthesize, and organize the material at hand, and to sometimes add explanations. The evangelists went through the same complex process and gave us the reality of their experience: the obscure Jesus of history is indeed the dazzling Christ of faith. The fact also that Jesus immediately, even during his preaching ministry, was "recognized to the level of God"; that the *kerygma* of the Christian faith was complete from its very beginning; and the impressive fact that no work of antiquity has been transmitted so accurately in as many copies and ancient versions as the New Testament, all show, in a triumphant way, the truth of the historical Jesus and the truth of his deity.

Mr. Messori demonstrates in a convincing way that the authors of the New Testament give us a genuine and not a false picture of Jesus Christ and his disciples. Indeed, Christianity can be distinguished from the other religions of the world precisely by its historical character. No one can refute the integrity of the words of Jesus, and moreover the continuity in time and space of his message makes it undisputably believable. Finally, the author presents the lifestyle of the gospels which is full of "radical love" and special attitudes towards death and the family, towards women and children, together with the admirable defense of human dignity.

The author ends his book with a statement of doubt which can be construed as an affirmation of faith: "Lord, if we are in error, you are the one who deceived us." Indeed, the God revealed in Jesus is not the self-sufficient abstraction of philosophy. Indeed he humbles himself for our sake, and he manifested himself in the form of a servant, as Saint Paul writes, "that every tongue will proclaim to the glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil 2.5-11).

Undoubtedly, this is a remarkable book, but I doubt that it is on the level of the average person as the author claims in his preface. I must also add here that although the author refers to diverse Western thinkers from Saint Augustine to Dietrick Bonhoeffer, he ignores

completely the Fathers of the Eastern Church. Why? They faced the same problematics, and they gave sound and immeasurably precious answers. In any case, the author's faith, I hope, will rekindle the faith of many people who need to be assured by the dynamics of such a book.

George S. Bebis

*Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology*

G.O.T.R. 32 (87)

*Συναντήσεις με τὸν Κόντογλου [Meetings with Kontoglou].*  
By Constantine Cavarinos. Athens: Astir, 1985. Pp. 221, paper.

If Constantine Cavarinos has earned a reputation in both the United States and Greece for his outstanding contributions to Byzantine studies and Orthodox scholarship in general, his reputation is one that closely associates him with the renowned Greek scholar and iconographer, Photios Kontoglou. It should surprise no one, then, to see this present book of personal reflections on Dr. Cavarinos' many meetings with his friend and spiritual colleague. It constitutes an expression of his deep appreciation for Kontoglou's Orthodox witness, a witness lauded in many of Cavarinos' books and formally marked by a series of essays (in Greek) written two years after Kontoglou's death in 1965, *Hellas kai Orthodoxya* (Athens, 1967), by Cavarinos.

In his accounts of various personal encounters with Kontoglou, Dr. Cavarinos gives a glimpse into the mature years of this great man, from about 1920 to his repose. There is a wide presentation of Kontoglou's thoughts and impressions on various subjects, leaving the reader with a clear impression of the man as iconographer, as author, as philosopher, and, most importantly, as a paradigmatic Orthodox Christian. Cavarinos' observations are set forth in an easy style, lucidly, and wholly ingenuously. The man who was Kontoglou therefore emerges from these accounts as a real human being, not as the would-be hero of an admiring scholar's overstatement. I have seldom read such an enjoyable book about any contemporary figure, free as it is from the tendency to treat recent figures with the exaggerated intimacy or contrived objectivity prompted by temporal proximity.

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## The Papal Primacy

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EMMANUEL CLAPSIS

THE DECISION TO STUDY THE PRIMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME in the Universal Church of Christ is indicative that the Orthodox-Roman Catholic consultation is moving towards the center of the divisive issues that have separated our respective communions. In this process, our deliberations must take into serious account the theological statements of the bilateral dialogues between Roman Catholics and Anglicans, Lutherans, and others as well as the reflection of Roman Catholic theologians who are seeking to reform, but not to reject the primacy of the Roman Church.<sup>1</sup> However, the Orthodox-Roman theological reflection of the primacy of the Roman Church in the Universal Church of Christ must proceed from the theological convergence that we have reached concerning the nature of the Church as *koinonia*, based on the doctrine of the Trinity and the Eucharist.<sup>2</sup> This will help us to transcend, without ignoring, some

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<sup>1</sup>Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, *The Final Report* (Washington, 1982); hereafter referred as *The ARCIC Statement*; Paul Empie and T. Austin Murphy, eds., *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church: Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue* (Minneapolis, 1974); Patric Granfield, *The Papacy in Transition* (Garden City, 1980); Hans Küng, *The Church* (New York), pp. 444-48; Hans Küng, ed., *Papal Ministry in the Church*. Concilium 64 (New York, 1976); Karl-Heinz Ohlig, *Why We Need the Pope* (St. Meinrad, 1975); J. Meyendorff et al. eds., *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church* (London, 1963); J. M. R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome* (Wilmington, DE., 1983); Raymond Brown et al. eds., *Peter in the New Testament* (Minneapolis-New York, 1973).

<sup>2</sup>It is the basic assumption of this paper that no progress can be accomplished in our discussions of the Roman claims of primacy of the bishop

divisive and inconclusive references to historical events.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in my view, the primacy of the bishop of Rome needs to be debated, re-interpreted, and justified from the developing ecclesiology of communion as this view of the Church becomes the meeting point of our respective ecclesiologies.<sup>4</sup>

### *The Ecumenical Discussions*

It has become increasingly apparent, in the ecumenical sense, that many non-Roman theologians and churches are actually coming to regard some exercise of primacy by the Roman see as "normal,"

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of Rome in the Universal Church unless it is seen as an intrinsic ecclesiological issues which needs to be refuted or justified on theological rather than on historical grounds.

<sup>3</sup>This view is based upon the ecumenical findings of biblical scholars that "the papacy in its developed form cannot be read back into the New Testament," Brown, *Peter*, p. 8. It is therefore anachronistic to apply terms such as "pope" or "primacy" to the place which Peter held within the New Testament. From an historical perspective, there is no conclusive documentary evidence from the first century or the early decades of the second of the exercise of, or even the claim to, a primacy of the Roman bishop or to a connection with Peter, although documents from this period accord the church at Rome some kind of preeminence. However, by the time of Pope Leo I (440-61), the bishops of Rome "have developed a self-image which represents them as the heirs and successors and, in a sense, the continuing embodiment of Peter, but "this view is tolerated in the Christian East when it is in the interest of the East to do so, otherwise it tends to be rejected in practice." See the article of Arthur Carl Peipkorn "The Roman Primacy in the Patristic Era: II, from Nicaea to Leo the Great" in *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, p. 97. See also G. Larentzakis, *Ἡ ἐκκλησία Ρώμης καὶ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος αὐτῆς* (Thessalonike, 1983); Megas Pharantos, "Τὸ παπικὸν πρωτεῖον, δογματικὴ θεώρησις, ἐξ ἐπόψεως Ὁρθοδόξου," *Δογματικά καὶ ἠθικά* (Athens, 1983), pp. 149-91; Emilianos Timiadis, "'Tu Es Petrus': An Orthodox Approach," *Byzantine and Patristic Review* 2 (1983) 5-26; Vlasios Pheidias, "'Ἡ θέσις τοῦ πρώτου τῶν ἐπισκόπων εἰς τὴν κοινωνία τῶν τοπικῶν ἐκκλησιῶν," *Eglise Locale et Eglise Universelle* (Chambesy, 1981), pp. 151-75.

<sup>4</sup>Olivier Clement, "Orthodox Ecclesiology as an Ecclesiology of Communion," *One in Christ*, 6 (1970) 101-22; John D. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion* (New York, 1985); J. Hammer, *The Church is a Communion* (New York, 1964); Michael A. Fahey, "Ecclesial Community as a Communion," *The Jurist* 36 (1976) 4-23; Robert Kress, "The Church as Communion: Trinity and Incarnation as the Foundation of Ecclesiology," *ibid.* pp. 127-57.

“desirable,” “useful,” or to some degree, “required.” However, there is a considerable difference between the official Roman Catholic view of the primacy and the understanding of the desirable primacy that non-Roman theologians, churches, and communions are ready to accept for the well-being of the Church!<sup>5</sup>

In the bilateral dialogues of Roman Catholics with Anglicans, Lutherans, and Reform, the primacy of the bishop of Rome is discussed in the context of communion ecclesiology. From the perspective of this common ecclesiology, the Eucharist is seen as the effectual sign of koinonia, episkope as serving the koinonia, and primacy properly understood and exercised as a visible and possibly necessary link between all those exercising episkope within the koinonia. The local church (a diocese), manifests the fullness of the Church. The communion of faith, love, and order of all local churches, reveals the unity of God’s Church that subsists in fullness in each local church.<sup>6</sup> The communion of the local churches, in its history, attributed to bishops of prominent sees a function of oversight on bishops of their regions as one of the ways of maintaining the faithfulness and the unity of the local churches to Christ’s gospel.<sup>7</sup>

Partly as a result of this development, the see of Rome, whose prominence was associated with the death of Peter and Paul, became

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<sup>5</sup>J. M. R. Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 10.

<sup>6</sup>John D. Zizioulas, “The Local Church in a Eucharistic Perspective — An Orthodox Contribution,” *In Each Place — Towards a Fellowship of Local Churches Truly United* (Geneva, 1977), pp. 50-61; idem., “The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church,” in *The New Man, An Orthodox and Reform Dialogue*, eds. J. Meyendorff and J. McKelland (New Brunswick, NJ., 1985), pp. 103-31; E. Lanne, “The Local Church: Its Catholicity and Apostolicity,” *One in Christ* 6 (1970) 288-313; H. de Lubac, *Les églises particulières de l’Église Universelle* (Paris, 1971); S. J. Killian, “The Meaning and Nature of the Local Church,” *CTSA Proceedings* 35 (1980) 244-55; P. Granfield, “The Local Church as a Center of Communication and Control,” *CTSA Proceedings*, 35 (1980) 256-63; J. Komonchak, “The Church Universal as the Communion of Churches,” *Where Does the Church Stand?* ed. G. Alberigo. Concilium 146. (New York, 1981). For the biblical and patristic documentation of the theology of the local church see: Raymond E. Brown, “New Testament Background for the Concept of Local Church,” *CTSA Proceedings* 36 (1981) 1-14; Michael Fahey, “Ecclesiae Sorores Ac Fratres: Sibling Communion in the Pre-Nicene Christian Era,” *CTSA Proceedings* 36 (1981) 15-38.

<sup>7</sup>Vlassios Pheidias, “Ὁ Θεός,” p. 155.

the principle center in matters concerning the Universal Church.<sup>8</sup> The ARCIC Statement of Venice (1976) states that the ministry of the bishop of Rome among his brother bishops was "interpreted" as Christ's will for his Church and it was compared in its importance "by analogy" with the position of Peter among the apostles.<sup>9</sup> Classical Roman Catholic tradition maintained that the universal primacy of the bishop of Rome was divinely instituted by Jesus Christ as this can be derived from the Petrine texts, and from the gospel accounts of Matthew (16.17-19), Luke (22.32), and John (21.15-17), all of which, according to the Roman tradition, refer not simply to the historical Peter, but to his successors to the end of time.<sup>10</sup>

Today, scriptural scholars of all traditions agree that we can discern in the New Testament an early tradition which attributes a special position to Peter among the twelve apostles of Christ upon whose witness the Church built its identity, but responsibility for pastoral leadership was not restricted to Peter.<sup>11</sup> The expression, "binding

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<sup>8</sup> On the patristic development of the primacy of the bishop of Rome see: Gregorios Larentzakis, *Ἐκκλησία Πώμης*; James F. McCue, "The Roman Primacy in the Patristic Era: The Beginnings Through Nicea," *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, pp. 44-72; Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "The Roman Primacy in the Patristic Era: From Nicaea to Leo the Great," *ibid.*, pp. 73-97; Michael Miller, *The Divine Right of the Papacy in Recent Ecumenical Theology*, *Analecta Gregoriana*, 218 (Rome, 1980); J. Meyendorff, "St. Peter in Byzantine Theology," in *The Primacy of Peter*, pp. 7-29.

<sup>9</sup> The Venice Statement of ARCIC # 12.

<sup>10</sup> Denzinger-Schönmetzer, *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (Freiburg, 1963), No. 3055. Hereafter cited DS.

<sup>11</sup> Brown, *Peter*; G. Kretschmar, "St. Peter's Place in the Apostolic Church," *The Ecumenical Review* 9 (1956-57) 85-90; R. Pesch, "The Position and Significance of Peter in the Church of the New Testament. A Survey of Current Research," *Papal Ministry in the Church*, ed. H. Küng (Concilium 64 — New York, 1971) 21-35; B. Rigauz, "St. Peter in Contemporary Exegesis," *Progress and Decline in the History of Church Renewal*, ed. R. Aubert (Concilium 27 — New York, 1967) 147-79; J. Blank, "The Person and Office of Peter in the New Testament," in *Truth and Certainty* (Concilium 83 — New York, 1973) 42-55; O. Cullman, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr. A Historical and Theological Essay* (Philadelphia, 1962); C. Journet, *The Primacy of Peter from the Protestant and from the Catholic Point of View* (Westminster, 1954); R. Schnackenburg, "The Petrine Office. Peter's Relationship to the Other Apostles," *Theology Digest* 20 (1972) 148-52; J. Burgen, *A History of the Exegesis of Matthew 16.17-19 from 1781 to 1965*



and loosing” which is used for the explicit commission to Peter in Matthew 16.19, appears again in Matthew 18.18, in the promise made by Christ directly to all the disciples. Similarly, the foundation upon which the Church is built is related to Peter in Matthew 16.16, and to the whole apostolic body elsewhere in the New Testament (cf. Eph 2.10). Thus it is possible to conclude that although the distinctive features of Peter’s ministry are stressed, this ministry is that of an apostle and it does not isolate him from the ministry of the other apostles. In addition, the New Testament does not contain an explicit record of a transmission of Peter’s leadership, nor is the transmission of apostolic authority in general very clear. As a result of this, the Petrine texts of the New Testament were subjected to differing interpretations as early as the time of the church Fathers. For many theologians, Roman “primacy” developed gradually in the West due to the convergence of a number of factors, e.g., the dignity of Rome as the only apostolic Church in the West; the tradition that both Peter and Paul had been martyred there; the long history of Rome as a capital of the Roman Empire; and its continuing positions as the chief center of commerce and communication.<sup>12</sup> However, this view does not necessarily consider the primacy of the bishop of Rome as contrary to the New Testament. It is possible to accept the primacy of Rome with some qualifications as a part of God’s purpose regarding the Church’s unity and catholicity while admitting that the New Testament texts offer no sufficient basis for this.<sup>13</sup> Even if Peter’s role cannot be transmitted in its totality, this does not exclude the analogical continuation of his ministry of unity guided by the Spirit among those who continue the apostolic mission. This “Petrine function”

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(Basel, 1965); S. Agourides, “The Purpose of John 21,” *Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament*, ed. B. L. Daniels and M. J. Suggs (Salt Lake City, 1967) 127-32; Veselin Kesich, “The Problem of Peter’s Primacy in the New Testament and the Early Christian Exegesis,” *St. Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 4 (1960) 35-46; Nicolas Koulomzine, “Peter’s Place in the Early Church,” *The Primacy of Peter in the Orthodox Church*, pp. 111-34.

<sup>12</sup>Avery Dulles, “Papal Authority in Roman Catholicism” in *A Pope for All Christians?*, p. 53; Kilian McDonnell, “Papal Primacy: Development, Centralization, and Changing Styles,” in *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, p. 174.

<sup>13</sup>The Windsor Statement of ARCIC # 7. This view, however, has been repudiated by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on March 29, 1982 in its comments on the Final Report of ARCIC.

is necessary for the unity and catholicity of the Church and it may be executed by the pope as Vatican I suggests, in consultation, but not independently from the bishops of God's Church.

For Roman Catholics, the relationship of the bishop of Rome with the ecumenical synods is not clearly defined as it is pointed out by Avery Dulles: "Vatican I, which placed supreme authority in the pope, left some uncertainty regarding the relations between the Papacy, the universal episcopate, and ecumenical synods (which are not necessarily mere meetings of bishops). Since this uncertainty was not fully cleared up by Vatican II, the question of the supreme directive power in the Church still requires further discussion within the Roman Catholic communion."<sup>14</sup> More specifically, *Lumen Gentium* located the ministry of both the pope and the episcopal college within the one people of God and its statements on the full ecclesial reality of the local Church lead us to believe that Vatican II opted for an ecclesiology of communion in defining the nature of the Church. The real theological problem lies in specifying the exact relationship between the episcopal college and the pope acting without *juridical* dependence on the college of which he is the head, or on the communion of the local churches whose unity and truth safeguards by being a central member of it.<sup>15</sup> Karl Rahner proposed that there can only be *one* organ possessing *supreme potestas* in the Universal Church: the universal episcopal college with its head, the bishop of Rome. The episcopal college can never exercise its *supreme potestas* except in union with its head, but neither can the pope ever exercise *supreme potestas* in the Universal Church except as head of the episcopal college (although there are no juridical limitations on the

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<sup>14</sup>Dulles, "Papal Authority," p. 55; Tillard, *The Bishop of Rome*, p. 41.

<sup>15</sup>This position can be found in *Lumen Gentium* # 25: "... And this is, the infallibility which the Roman Pontiff, the head of the college of bishops, enjoys in virtue of his office, when, as the supreme shepherd and teacher of all the faithful, who confirms his brethren in their faith, by a definitive act he proclaims a doctrine of faith and morals. And therefore his definitions, of themselves, and *not from the consent of the Church*, are justly styled irreformable, since they are pronounced with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, promised to him in blessed Peter, and therefore *they need no approval of others, nor do they allow an appeal to any other judgement* . . . The infallibility promised to the Church resides also in the body of bishops, when that body exercises the supreme magisterium with the successor of Peter . . . "

exercise of this primatial power and no juridical response from the decisions of the legitimate pope).<sup>16</sup> It is a truism to state that Vatican II, by its doctrine of episcopal collegiality, placed the primacy of the bishop of Rome in a new and much needed conciliar interpretative framework but, it simultaneously maintained (without synthesizing) the supreme and, to a certain degree, uncontrollable authority that Vatican I attributed to the bishop of Rome.<sup>17</sup>

This ambiguous theological advance of Vatican II led the participants of the ARCIC to note: "communion with the bishop of Rome does not imply submission to an authority which would stifle the distinctive features of the local churches. The purpose of the episcopal function of the bishop of Rome is to promote Christian fellowship in faithfulness to the teaching of the apostles."<sup>18</sup> The critical question here is whether this kind of ministry has been truly exercised by the bishop of Rome in a consistent manner which may justify its claims of importance. The ARCIC statement notes:

The theological interpretation of this primacy and the administrative structures through which it has been exercised, have varied considerably through the centuries. Neither theory nor practice, however, has ever fully reflected these ideals. Sometimes functions assumed by the see of Rome were not necessarily linked to the primacy. Sometimes the conduct of the occupants of this see has been unworthy of his office. Sometimes the image of this office has been obscured by interpretations placed upon it, and sometimes external pressures have made its proper exercise almost impossible.<sup>19</sup>

I wonder whether it is possible for the bishop of Rome to exercise his primacy with the approval of all Christians in moments of divisive theological or ecclesiastical quarrels in order to safeguard the unity, the truth, and the catholicity of Christ's Church. By the

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<sup>16</sup>K. Rahner, *Commentary on Lumen Gentium* # 18-27; H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II* (New York, 1967), 1, pp. 186-218.

<sup>17</sup>For the reactions of the Orthodox see: John Meyendorff, *Orthodoxy and Catholicity* (New York, 1966), pp. 15-165; idem., "Rome and Orthodoxy: Authority or Truth?" in *A Pope for All Christians?*, p. 144.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. For Lutheran reservations see: Joseph A. Burgess, "Luther and the Papacy: A Review of Some Basic Issues," *A Pope for All Christians?* p. 37. For an Orthodox criticism of papacy see: Megalos Phrantos, *Τὸ παπικὸν πρωτεῖον καὶ ἡ Ὁρθόδοξος Ἐκκλησία* (Athens, 1983), pp. 193-217.

same token, it is difficult to justify ecclesiological, the juridical independence of the bishop of Rome from the college of bishops of which he is head. Does not this juridical independence lead to authoritarian abuses of the pope's ecclesiastical power if and when he chooses to do so? What is the administrative structure that the primacy demands for its proper function in the life of the Church? More significantly, what are the ecumenically accepted rights (of diakonia) and limits (of authority) of the bishop of Rome within a communion of local churches who been judged to be fully catholic?

One of the most effective and normative means which the Church has in order to resolve conflicts and debates which endanger its unity or threaten to distort its gospel is to appeal to tradition as it is embodied in Scripture, conciliar creeds, canons, and patristic writings. The bishops in such situations have a special responsibility to safeguard the unity and the truth of the Church because it is their collective as well as their individual responsibility to defend and to interpret the apostolic faith in unity with all God's people.<sup>20</sup>

However, it is possible for the bishops to be intolerant, fallible in their judgments, and to distort the truth. But since Christ will never desert his Church, we are confident that ultimately the Holy Spirit will lead Christ's Church into all truths and unity.<sup>21</sup> The Church is infallible by the grace of the Holy Spirit when it meets in synods in order to clarify the Church's understanding of the central truths of salvation and after these synods have been recognized by the people of God as true and catholic expressions of the apostolic faith.<sup>22</sup> In this context the universal primacy of the bishop of Rome will make him the president as well as the spokesman of the Church and, in times of need, he may be the unitary voice of the Church that reflects and expresses its conscience.

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<sup>20</sup>For an ecumenical evaluation and study of episkope see: Faith and Order Paper 102, *Episkope and Episcopate in Ecumenical Perspective* (Geneva, 1979). For an Orthodox view see: John Zizioulas, *Ενότης τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῇ θεῷ εὐχαριστία καὶ τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ κατὰ τοὺς τρεῖς πρώτους αἰῶνας* (Athens, 1965).

<sup>21</sup>The ARCIC Statement of Venice # 18.

<sup>22</sup>For an ecumenical study of the councils see: *Council and the Ecumenical Movement*, World Council Studies No. 5 (Geneva, 1968); Peter Huizing and Knut Wolf, eds., *The Ecumenical Council — Its Significance in the Constitution of the Church* (Concilium 167 — New York, 1983), Kallistos Ware, "The Ecumenical Councils and the Conscience of the Church," in *Kanon: Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für das Recht der Ostkirchen* (1974) 217-33.

"A primate exercises his ministry not in isolation but in collegial association with his brother bishops."<sup>23</sup> Thus, "primacy fulfills its purpose by helping the churches to listen to one another, to grow in love and unity, and to strive together towards the fullness of Christian life and witness; it respects and promotes Christian freedom and spontaneity; it does not seek uniformity where diversity is legitimate, or centralized administration to the detriment of the local churches."<sup>24</sup>

With regard to the Roman claim that the pope possesses universal immediate jurisdiction *over* the life of the local churches, the limits of which are not clearly specified, many Christians fear that this jurisdiction may be subject to an illegitimate and uncontrolled use.<sup>25</sup> The ARCIC statement of Windsor defines jurisdiction as "the authority of power (*potestas*) necessary for the exercise of an office"<sup>26</sup> and it proceeds to accept the "universal immediate jurisdiction" of the bishop of Rome as inherent in his office due to his call to serve the unity of the *koinonia* "as whole and in each of its parts."<sup>27</sup> However, this "universal immediate jurisdiction" should be exercised not in isolation, but in collegial association with his brother bishops who are also equally concerned for the unity and the truth of the Universal Church as a result of their office and not because of their association with the bishop of Rome.

Yet, the bishop of Rome, the Windsor statement declares, "has the right in special cases to intervene in the affairs of a diocese and to receive appeals from the decision of a diocesan bishop. It is because the universal primate, in collegial association with his fellow bishops, has the task of safeguarding the faith and the unity of the Universal Church that the diocesan bishop is subject to his authority."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>The ARCIC Statement of Venice # 21.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>The ARCIC Statement of Venice # 24d. It is important to note that Roman Catholicism relies primarily on Christian prophetic protest to compensate for the lack of juridical limitations on the exercise of papal primacy. For ecumenical purposes a more official acknowledgement of the moral limitations on the exercise of papal authority is needed.

<sup>26</sup>The ARCIC Statement of Windsor # 16.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.* # 18.

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.* # 20. This unlimited papal primacy of jurisdiction is predicated, of course, only to a certainly legitimate pope. The emergency procedures which would have to be invoked in the case of an insane or heretical pope are not discussed in any official Catholic document.

However this kind of authority, although it is defined not as autocratic power over the Church, but as a service in and to the Church, which is a communion in faith and charity of local churches, needs in its practical application to be safeguarded against any abuses which may lead to suppression of theological and liturgical traditions of which the bishop of Rome does not approve.

### *The Orthodox Position*

What is the Orthodox view on the primacy of the bishop of Rome, especially as this is reinterpreted by Roman Catholicism in its dialogue with other Western Christian churches? One may rejoice by the fact that Western Christians begin to recover the importance of the bishop of Rome for the unity of the Western Christendom, but it is imperative from an Orthodox perspective to study the primacy of Rome in the context of the primacies of the patriarchs of the East and their role in the Universal Church.<sup>29</sup>

It would be impossible for us to reach any convergence on the significance of the bishop of Rome if our consultation begins with a comparison of the classical Roman Catholic views and Orthodox views on the papacy. Our common reflection on the papacy must be situated in the common ecclesiology of communion that our respective churches have begun to share especially after Vatican II.<sup>30</sup> In 1974 our consultation stated: "The Church is the communion of believers living in Jesus Christ with the Father. It has its origins and

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<sup>29</sup>Vlassios Pheidias, *Προϋποθέσεις διαμορφώσεως του θεσμού της πενταρχίας* (Athens, 1969).

<sup>30</sup>For the evaluation of Vatican II's conciliar texts which favor an ecclesiology of communion see: E. Lanne, "The Local Church: Its Catholicity and Apostolicity," *One in Christ* 6 (1970) 288-312; H. de Lubac, *Les églises particulières de l'Eglise Universelle* (Paris, 1971) 29-56; S. J. Kilian, "The Meaning and Nature of the Local Church," *CTSA Proceedings* 35 (1980) 244-55; H. Legrand, "The Revaluation of Local Churches: Some Theological Implications," in *The Unifying Role of the Bishop*, ed. E. Schillebeeckx, (Concilium 71 — New York, 1972) 53-64. J. Komonchak calls this kind of ecclesiology a Copernican revolution in ecclesiology and he states: "The Church is not universal in the sense of a transnational corporation which from a central office establishes branches in major cities around the world. The universal, catholic Church arises, if you will, from below, because in every local church the full reality of what is called "the Church" is realized: the communion of believers in the holy things won for us by Christ. The Church universal comes to be out of the mutual reception and communion of the local church," pp. 58-59 of his article: "Ministry and the Local Church," *CTSA Proceedings* 36 (1981).

prototype in the Trinity in which there is both distinction of persons and unity based on love, not subordination.”<sup>31</sup> It also affirmed that the eucharistic celebration “both proclaims the most profound realization of the Church and realizes what it proclaims in the measure that the community opens itself to the Spirit.”<sup>32</sup> This kind of ecclesiology leads to an affirmation of the full catholicity of the local church, provided that it lives by the Spirit of God which makes her the living body of Christ in communion of love with other local churches of God who share the same faith and life pattern. Within the unity of the local churches, “a real hierarchy of churches was recognized in response to the demands of the mission of the Church,”<sup>33</sup> without, however, the fundamental equality of all churches to be destroyed. How should we understand “the hierarchy of churches” which are fundamentally and irreversibly equal to each other as a result of God’s full presence in them? What is the qualitative theological difference between a local church which exercises primacy and another local over which a primacy is exercised? If a local church is fully catholic, how is it enriched by its relation with a primatial church? The Roman Catholic members of this consultation in 1974 vindicated the primacy of the bishop of Rome as it was defined by Vatican I without any reference to the advances of the second Vatican Council through which a more communitarian image of the papacy could be advanced.<sup>34</sup> Although the institution of primacy (regional or universal), from an Orthodox perspective, is taken for granted by the fact of its existence, I will agree with Father Alexander Schmemmann, who noted that we badly need a clarification of the nature and function of all the primacies and, first of all, of the very concept of primacy.<sup>35</sup> It is imperative for the ecumenical witness of Orthodoxy to develop an ecclesiological sound interpretation of primacy. If primacy is defined as a form of power, then we encounter the question whether in the Orthodox Church there is a power superior to that of a bishop, i.e., a power *over* the bishop, and hence the church of which he is head.

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<sup>31</sup>Edward J. Kilmartin, *Toward Reunion, The Roman Catholic and the Orthodox Churches* (New York, 1979), p. 77.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 79.

<sup>35</sup>Alexander Schmemmann, “The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology,” in *The Primacy of Peter*, p. 31.

Theologically and ecclesiology the answer must be unconditionally no, because there is no power *over* the bishop and his church. However, in the canonical and historical life of the Church such supreme power not only exists but it is conceived as the foundation of the Church, and the basis of its canonical system. This, according to Father Schmemmann, reflects the alienation of the canonical tradition from ecclesiology and its reduction to canon law in the context of which the life of the Church came to be expressed in juridical terms.<sup>36</sup>

Our theological statement on the nature of the Church (1974) as well as the Munich Statement of the International Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue have rejected indirectly the idea of universal ecclesiology in which the Church is the *sum* of all local churches, which all together constitute the body of Christ. This kind of ecclesiology in which the Church is conceived in terms of *whole* and *parts* means that each local church is only a part, a member of the Universal Church, and it participates in the Church only through belonging to the whole.<sup>37</sup> Thus, if the Church is a universal organism then she must have as a head a universal bishop as the focus of her unity and as the organ of supreme power. Consequently, the model of ecclesiology makes imperative the necessity of universal primacy as divinely instituted for the essential being of the Church. It is this kind of ecclesiology together with other historical causes that gave birth to the image of papacy that Vatican I defined in 1870.

In eucharistic ecclesiology, which affirms the catholicity of the local church, there is no room for the categories of "parts" and of the "whole," because it is the very essence of this ecclesiology that the Universal Church subsists in *toto* in the local church.<sup>38</sup> This kind

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

<sup>37</sup>This was done through the affirmation of the catholicity of the local church. For a Roman Catholic refutation of the universalistic ecclesiology see: Joseph Komonchak, "The Church Universal as the communion of the local Church," in *Where Does the Church Stand?*, ed. G. Alberigo (Concilium 146 — New York, 1981), pp. 30-35.

<sup>38</sup>Nicolas Afanassieff, "The Church Which Presides in Love," *The Primacy of Peter*, pp. 57-111; J. D. Zizioulas, "The Eucharistic Community and the Catholicity of the Church," *The New Man*, pp. 107-31; idem., "The Local Church in a Eucharistic Perspective — An Orthodox Contribution," *In Each Place, Toward a Fellowship of Local Churches Truly United* (Geneva, 1977), pp. 50-61.



of ecclesiology excludes the idea of primacy, understood as power *over* the local church and her bishop. The local churches, however, are not self-sufficient monads but are united with each other, not in terms of "parts" and "whole," but with regard to their identity of order, faith, and gifts of the Holy Spirit which make each one and all of them together the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. Trinitarian ecclesiology also develops the insight that there is one Church as there is one nature in God, but the very best way to express the oneness of the Church is the communion of the many local churches. It is very important, however, to emphasize that the multiplicity of the Church should not be subjected to its oneness because communion and oneness coincide in eucharistic and trinitarian ecclesiology and therefore the multiplicity of the Church is constitutive of its oneness. This in the life of the local church means that the "one," the bishop, cannot exist without the "many," the community, and the many cannot exist without the one. This implies that all *pyramidal* notions disappear in ecclesiology: the "one" and the "many" co-exist as two aspects of the same being. There is no ministry which does not need the other ministries. On the universal level this means that the Church manifest its oneness through a ministry which composes *simultaneously* a *primus* and a synod of which he is a *primus*. Thus from this perspective, it is possible to accept a universal primacy of a bishop which, however, cannot be conceived apart from the synod or over it.<sup>39</sup>

The communion of the local churches which are ontologically identical in faith, order, and charisms of the Holy Spirit witness their unity when they gather themselves together, through their bishops, in synods. "The synod is not 'power' in the juridical sense of the word, for there can exist no power over the Church, the Body of Christ. The synod is, rather, a *witness* to the identity of all churches as the Church of God in faith, life, and 'agape.' If in his own church the bishop is priest, teacher, and pastor, the divinely appointed witness and keeper of the Catholic faith, it is through the agreement of all bishops, as revealed in the synod that all churches both manifest and maintain the ontological unity of

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<sup>39</sup>J. D. Zizioulas, "Christology, Pneumatology and Ecclesial Institutions," *Being as Communion, Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York, 1985).

tradition.”<sup>40</sup> In addition as a result of the church life and mission in the context of history, the synod becomes in times of discord the *common* voice, the common testimony of the ontological unity of several (or all) churches. Thus, for Orthodoxy the truth that a synod affirms makes the synod an authority in the life of the Church from which the basis of its primacy is derived as binding for the historical life of the God’s Church. However, the primacy of the synod cannot be conceived as power over the local church but as a charismatic instrument through which the churches of God witness and express their ontological unity in the truth of the Gospel. The primacy of the Synod, through which the local churches witness and express their unity in the salvific truths of Christ, does not exclude the primacy of the first bishop of the metropolitan. In regional synods in which all the bishops of the area must participate, the primacy of the first bishop must be acknowledged and be respected as the famous 34 Apostolic Canon states: “The bishops of every nation must acknowledge him who is first among them and account him as their head, and do nothing of consequence without his consent . . . but neither let him (who is the first) do anything without the consent of all; for so there will be unanimity . . . ” Thus from this canon, it is evident that the regional primacy cannot be conceived as power or jurisdiction but only as an expression of the unity and unanimity of all bishops and consequently of all churches of the area.

In the same manner we must understand the universal primacy of the Roman Church. It is possible, based on Christian tradition to affirm the validity of the claims of universal primacy of the Church of Rome. Orthodox theology, however, objects the identification of this primacy with “supreme power” which transforms Rome into the *principium radix et origio* of the unity of the unity of the Church and of the Church herself.<sup>41</sup> It is impossible to deny the fact that the Church from the first days of its existence possessed an ecumenical center of her unity and agreement. In the apostolic and Judaeo-

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<sup>40</sup>Alexander Schmemmann, “The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology,” p. 44; J. Zizioulas, “The Development of Conciliar Structures to the Time of the First Ecumenical Council,” *Councils and the Ecumenical Movement*, WCC Studies No. 5 (Geneva, 1968) 34-51.

<sup>41</sup>A. Schmemmann, “The Idea of Primacy in Orthodox Ecclesiology,” p. 48; Kallistos Ware, “Primacy, Collegiality and the People of God,” *Orthodoxy: Life and Freedom*, ed. A. J. Philippou (Oxford, 1973), p. 120.

Christian period it was the Church of Jerusalem and later the Church of Rome — “presiding in agape” according to Saint Ignatios of Antioch.<sup>42</sup> For the Orthodox the essence and the purpose of this primacy is to express and preserve the unity of the Church in faith and life; to express and preserve the unanimity of all churches; to keep them from isolating themselves into ecclesiastical provincialism, losing the catholicity, separating themselves from the unity of life. It means ultimately to assume the care, the *sollicitudo* of the churches so that each one of them can abide in that fullness which is always the *whole* Catholic tradition and not any “part” of it. Thus, the idea of primacy excludes the idea of jurisdiction but implies that of an “order” of Church which does not subordinate one church to another, but which makes it possible for all churches to live *together* this life of all in each and of each in all.<sup>43</sup>

In summary, Orthodoxy does not reject the Roman primacy as such, but simply a particular way of understanding that primacy. The bishop of Rome within a reintegrated Christendom will be considered as *primus inter pares* who serves in love the unity of God’s Church. He cannot be accepted as ruler set up *over* the Church whose

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<sup>42</sup>Pheidias, *Ἡ θέσις*; E. Timiadis, “Tu es Petrus,” pp. 12-16.

<sup>43</sup>A. Schmemmann, “The Idea of Primacy,” p. 50; Roman Catholic theologians have digested the Orthodox position and beginning with J. Ratzinger, Karl Rahner and Heinrich Fries believe that there is one solution on this issue. Ratzinger, before his elevation to the present position, stated: “Rome must not require more of a primacy doctrine from the East than was formulated and experienced in the first millenium. In Phanar, on July 25, 1976, when Patriarch Athenegoras addressed the visiting pope as Peter’s successor, the first in honor among us, and the presider over charity, this great church leader was expressing the essential content of the declarations of the primacy of the first millenium. And Rome cannot ask for more. Unification could occur if the East abandons its attack on the Western development of the second millenium as being heretical, and accepts the Catholic Church as legitimate and orthodox in the form which it experienced in its own development. Conversely, unification could occur if the West recognized the Eastern Church as orthodox and legitimate in the form in which it has maintained itself”; see J. Ratzinger, “Die ökumenische Situation — Orthodoxie, Katholizismus und Reformation,” *Theologische Prinzipienlehre* (Munich, 1982), p. 209. This makes the pope a patriarch of the West and instantly limits his claim of universal jurisdictional primacy over the Universal Church. Orthodox theologians must reflect whether this view can be accepted within the boundaries of legitimate diversity and uniqueness characteristic of the Western Church.

diakonia is conceived through legalistic categories of power of jurisdiction. His authority must not be understood according to the standards of earthly authority and domination but in terms of loving ministry and humble service (Mt 20.25-27).<sup>45</sup>

Before the schism, in times of ecclesiastical discord and theological controversies, appeals for peaceful resolutions and mediation were made to the pope from all parts of the Christian world. For instance, in the course of the iconoclastic controversy, Saint Theodore the Studite (759-829) urged the emperor to consult the pope: "If there is anything in the patriarch's reply about which you feel doubt or disbelief . . . you may ask the chief elder in Rome for clarification, as has been the practice from the beginning according to inherited tradition."<sup>45</sup> However, from an Orthodox perspective it is important to emphasize that these appeals to the bishop of Rome should not be understood in juridical terms. The case was not closed when Rome had spoken, and the Byzantines felt free on occasions to reject a Roman ruling.<sup>46</sup>

In a reintegrated Christendom, when the pope takes his place once more as the *primus inter pares* within the Orthodox Catholic communion, the bishop of Rome will have the initiative in summoning a synod of the whole Church. The bishop of Rome, of course, will preside in such a synod of the whole Church and his office may coordinate the life and the witness of the Orthodox Catholic Church and be its spokesman in times of need. However, the role of acting as the voice of the Church is not to be restricted to any hierarchical order within the Church, still less to any single see. In principle, any bishop, priest or layman may be called by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the true faith.

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<sup>45</sup>Letters, 2, 86 (PG 99.1332A).

<sup>46</sup>Larentzakis, *Ἡ ἐκκλησία Ρώμης*.

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The Prophetic Mission of Orthodoxy  
Witness to Love in Service:  
Reflections on a Text of the Third Preconciliar  
Pan-Orthodox Conference

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GEORGE LEMOPOULOS

THE THIRD PAN-ORTHODOX PRECONCILIAR CONFERENCE WAS convened at Chambésy near Geneva in the fall of 1986 and involved the participation of some sixty delegates from all the local Orthodox churches.<sup>1</sup> The overall spirit and the results of the conference may be considered a milestone in the recent history of Orthodoxy.

At the same time, the issues with which the conference dealt and on which it drew up statements are also of great interest to the ecumenical movement in general. For they do not refer only (a) to the bilateral theological dialogues of the Orthodox Church or (b) to its participation in the ecumenical movement in general and the World Council of Churches (WCC) in particular, but also (c) to a wider ascetic and spiritual world view in connection with the institution of fasting, and, finally, (d) to an effort to lay the theological groundwork and to plan the coordination of the Orthodox Church's contribution to the maintenance of peace, justice and freedom in the world.<sup>2</sup>

The four documents issued by the conference are, of course, of a

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<sup>1</sup>"La 3ème Conférence panorthodoxe préconciliaire," in: *Episkepsis* 366 (November 1986) 1-23.

<sup>2</sup>"Décisions de la 3ème Conférence panorthodoxe préconciliaire," in: *Episkepsis* 369 (December 1986) 1-28. For the German translation of these statements, cf. "3. Vorkonziliare Panorthodox Konferenz," in *Una Sancta* 42 (1987) 1.4-28.

particular nature. They are documents *ad referendum* for the future council. They are neither final or binding. Nevertheless, they express the actual and unanimous stance of the Orthodox churches on those outstanding issues. It is certain that they will be more widely discussed and deeply studied at all levels of church life in the local Orthodox churches.

The following reflections have as their base the fourth document of the conference, the one on peace.<sup>3</sup> Even the title I use here is borrowed from a chapter of the text — a text about which an Orthodox theologian made the following remarks: “Upon reading the text itself, one is dazzled. It is, without doubt, the most profound, and finally the most important, of all those elaborated by the conference. I’ll say straight out: it took a lot of courage, a lot of strength of purpose for the bishops from the Eastern bloc countries to collaborate on the writing of these pages and to sign them. Here, the Spirit has passed by.”<sup>4</sup>

The aim of these few reflections is a first attempt at assessing certain paragraphs of the text from a “missionary standpoint.” Of course, one must admit that there are a certain number of weaknesses in this method; the document is dealing with another subject, hence some points of capital importance are entirely lacking from the particular point of view of mission (such as evangelism, external mission, gospel and culture, etc.); fragmentary references to the text undoubtedly do injustice to its value; my one-sided interpretation is somewhat subjective.

Nevertheless, this attempt is, I think, justifiable, because, as another Orthodox theologian remarked: “This document stays too much on the level of principles and does not suggest any criteria or examples of a strategy of collaboration of the Orthodox churches among themselves, regionally and universally, nor any examples capable of inspiring and stimulating practical cooperation with other confessions on the local, regional, and also universal planes, so as to put into practice these ideals so well described theologically.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The title of this document is: “The Contribution of the Orthodox Church to the Realization of Peace, Justice, Freedom, Fraternity and Love among People and to the Suppression of Racial and Other Discrimination.”

<sup>4</sup>Olivier, Clément, “La 3ème Conférence panorthodoxe préconciliaire (Interview),” *SOP* 117 (April 1987) 21.

<sup>5</sup>Dan Ilie Ciobotea, “Préparation du Concile — l’heure de vérité pour les Eglises orthodoxes (Interview),” in: *SOP* 118 (May 1987) 12.

Within the spirit of these remarks, the "missionary reading" I am attempting to give places the matter on a practical footing in one sector of church life, indeed, one of the liveliest and most important sectors. Thus, such an original reading helps to discover that if it is true that this document does not give concrete examples of involvement, it is also true that almost every part of it is inspired by local situations and realities, and it reflects the profound existential significance of what people believe and do.

For example, what is said about the diaconal mission as a response to God's will and as a mission in Christ's way is, in fact, a recommendation to all local communities; what is stated on the hunger problem is mainly related to Ethiopia, where some Orthodox churches (Cyprus, Greece, Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America) have actively been involved; what is proposed for the rights of minorities has in mind the situation in the Middle East and, particularly, in Lebanon; what is developed in the direction of a growing cooperation with believers of other faiths concerns the ancient patriarchates, living in the midst of a Muslim world; what is described as an Orthodox contribution to peace and justice is part of the ongoing program by the Orthodox Church of Russia; finally, what is stated on racial discriminations has probably a particular meaning for the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Alexandria and All Africa that discovers more and more the real dimensions of its flock when expressing its will to give witness in this field.

Yet, it is difficult to suggest concrete criteria or examples of collaboration for these situations. The Orthodox Church has always been aware that there are many situations where the word is easy but the deed is costly or the deed is easy but the word extremely costly. In such situations, what is important is to be faithful to him who said to his disciples: "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (Jn 20.21). What is also important is not to forget that the Church's mission is not always a success story but a continuous sacrifice in order to conquer "death by death," a long way passing through the sorrow of the cross in order to lead toward a life of joy. Finally, what is important in every situation is to be conscious that the past, the present and the future of our mission is written by the Holy Spirit, for the Church itself is the fulfillment of the promise: "You shall be my witness, when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" (Acts 1.8).



*The Church's Mission*

Man, as the apex and recapitulation of divine creation and as being in the image and likeness of his Creator, has been, for the Orthodox Church, the overall goal of its mission in the world and in the history of salvation. The re-establishing of man in the original grandeur and beauty of being "in the image and likeness" is considered, by the Orthodox Church, as the very essence of its mission. Even the eternal, purely theological, disputes which led to the formulation of the trinitarian, christological and ecclesiological doctrines of Christianity, aimed, in the last analysis, at preserving the authenticity and plenitude of Christian teaching about man and his salvation.<sup>6</sup>

From the beginning, the human person is presented as the overall goal of the *Church's mission*. Certainly, this is not a passage from God to humankind, or from theology to anthropology. It is rather an evangelistic witness, *first*, to the fact that every person is created in the image and in the likeness of God and, *second*, that "the one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God . . . for us and for our salvation . . . was incarnate." This theological affirmation is applied in the life of the Church by continually defending in the world the value and uniqueness of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, but ever called to repentance, to a return to God and to the true self.

Both dimensions of the Church's mission have but a sole aim: God's glory. Indeed, the human being's glorification of God is the only proper response to the love of God. For from God's love stems creation, salvation and divine providence.

Both dimensions of the Church's mission have as their starting-point the gift of adoption in Christ. The Son of God became man, and as man became a model of obedience to his Father. An obedience which caused him to suffer death on the cross (Phil 2.8). Through the cross, Christ brought about peace between us and the Father, and gave to all the possibility of becoming "children of God" (Jn 1.12), while he himself became "the pioneer of our salvation" (Heb 2.10-11). Through the cross, each person was not only reconciled to God, but also to the whole of humanity, for the whole of humankind was

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<sup>6</sup>Par. A.2.

reunited on the cross "in a new man," with Christ as its head (Eph 2.14-18).

Both dimensions of the Church's mission have as their lever the grace of the Holy Spirit. The grace of Christ is offered to everybody as a gift of the Holy Spirit, provided each person is also prepared to work toward his salvation, wrought by God in Christ (Eph 6.18; Rom 8.26-28). The Holy Spirit enables every person to participate in the task of renewal carried out once and for all by Christ (Tit 3.4-6). The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of the Son of God, cries out in the hearts of each person "Abba, Father" (Gal 4.6), thereby re-establishing their forgotten bond with God and the rest of humankind.

The same theological affirmation gives us a chance to grasp more fully the missionary character of the theology of the ecumenical synods. The christological doctrine, for example, makes it clearer that in the person of Christ the divine nature was united with the human nature, thus bringing about the promise of salvation and the renewal of the human race. Through belief in Christ, the Word made flesh, people are brought into a relationship with God and linked to one another.

For this reason, Christians do not make up any body, but the Church, "the body of Christ," who was crucified, who rose from the dead and who — as he promised — remains forever with those who believe in him "to the end of time" (Mt 28.20). It is, indeed, the dynamic, active and real presence of Christ in the bosom of the Church which makes it the "body of Christ" and the kingdom of God. At the same time, it makes for her own dynamic and active presence in the world.

This dynamism flows from the trinitarian doctrine: the Father sends his Son in the Holy Spirit into the world. Again, the Son sends his disciples into the world. The "sending" of mission, related to Pentecost, is essentially the sending of the Spirit (Jn 14.26), who manifests the life of God as communion (1 Cor 13.13). Thus, the corollary of the trinitarian doctrine is the ideal of harmonious fulfillment (*koinonia*) it implies, not only for human society as a whole, but also for each person separately. In the communion of the divine persons, there is no other motive than unselfish love, and this love is exemplary for the life of the Church's members.

On this point, a further thinking on how these principles penetrate today, the concrete missionary efforts of the Orthodox Church would be important. The Church, as *koinonia*, consisting of "men,

women, and children, different in sex and appearance, in nationality and language, in their life and age and ideas, arts and manners, customs and professions,"<sup>7</sup> has to encourage and develop the true nature and vocation of each one of these persons, their unique place in its overall missionary ministry. On the other hand, the Orthodox Church has probably to affirm strongly that the object of its mission is not only the human person alone, in an artificially religious isolation from the world, but also the world, the whole cosmos, as an entity of which each human person is nothing but a part.

### *Mission in Christ's Way*

God's will today, which involves the salvation of man here and now, obliges us to serve man, helping him to face his particular problems. Faith in Christ without a diaconal mission loses its meaning. To be Christian means to copy Christ and to be ready to serve him in the person of the weak, the hungry, the down-trodden and, in general, in the person of those in need. All other efforts to see Christ as a real presence, without coming into contact with the needy, is nothing more than pure theory.<sup>8</sup>

Love and gratitude toward Christ the Savior is shown in love for fellow human persons with whom Christ identified himself on the cross. This is copying Christ, carrying out the mission he entrusted to his followers. Obedience to the will of God outlines for each Christian the framework of his "diaconal mission," as well as that of the Church in the world. For when one becomes aware of the richness of God's love and grace, when one understands the greatness of God's sacrifice, and particularly upon becoming an active member of his body, one realizes that one cannot remain indifferent to one's neighbor, one cannot feel hatred and enmity toward him or her.

The glorification of God naturally turns into a mission of service, a "diaconal mission." So one enters into an existential relationship with Christ — a relationship based on the living of the mystery of salvation, a mystery which should permeate all one's life in the world. In other words, as the response to the call is a recognition of God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ, it is expressed mainly as a thanksgiving

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<sup>7</sup>Maximos the Confessor, PG 91.665.

<sup>8</sup>Par. G,4.

(*eucharistia*) in the sacramental life. For the Orthodox Church the sacramental experience leads to the understanding that the Church is not a self-centered community but a missionary community, called to a very specific mission in Christ's way. Schmemmann resumed this fact in an excellent way: "There exists and always has existed a different perspective, a different approach to the sacrament and this approach may be of crucial importance, precisely for the whole burning issue of mission, of our witness to Christ in the world. For the basic question is: What have we seen, touched with our hands? Of what have we partaken, been made communicants? Where do we call men? What can we offer them?"<sup>9</sup>

For this reason, worship does not only imply participating in the Church's sacrament and recognizing God's goodness toward us, but also reconciliation with one's neighbor, helping one's neighbor. This is how Christians lived in the early centuries. Justin Martyr, writing to Rome in about A.D. 150, gives a detailed account of the strength of the bond between the sacrament ("mystery") of the Word, the sacrament of the altar ("the Table") and the sacrament of the "brother": "The day called Sun-day an assembly is held in one place and the records of the apostles or writings of the prophets are read for as long as time allows. Then the president in a discourse admonishes and exhorts (us) to imitate these good things. Then we all stand up together and offer prayers: and bread and wine and water are brought up, and the president likewise offers prayers and thanksgivings, and the people assent, saying the Amen; and there is a distribution, and everyone participates in (the elements) over which thanks have been given; and they are sent through the deacons to those who are not present. And the wealthy who so desire give what they wish, as each chooses; and what is collected is deposited with the president. He helps orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or any other cause are in need, and those in prison, and strangers sojourning among us; in a word, he takes care of all those who are in need."<sup>10</sup>

Here we discover the chief method of evangelistic work, which is almost the same as that of the early Church. For those who have acknowledged the love of God for themselves, evangelistic witness

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<sup>9</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *The World as Sacrament* (Crestwood, 1973), p. 23.

<sup>10</sup> Justin Martyr, *First Apology* 67.3-7.

is not but the sharing of love. In this sense, “diaconal mission” is not an optional action, duty or moral stance in relation to the needy, additional to our community in Christ, but an indispensable expression of that community, which has its source in the eucharistic and liturgical life of the Church. This is the ‘liturgy after the liturgy’ and it is in this sense that it is described as a judgment upon our history (Mt 25.31-46).

For this very reason, the document we are examining stresses that the Orthodox Church today has a special mission in the modern world. It must radiate the joy of worship, especially eucharistic worship, and use it as a yardstick to measure the social witness of Christians in the world. In this context, the need for Christian unity — and world unity — becomes obvious. As the text says:

A wide horizon opens up here before the Orthodox churches, as they can propose to a divided world the essential element of their ecclesiological and social teaching: the ideal of liturgical and, in particular, eucharistic communion.<sup>11</sup>

Some fundamental priorities come out of such a perspective. Given the fact that the eucharist transforms the Church into a missionary reality, each local Orthodox church should emphasize the real witnessing vocation of each eucharistic community in a concrete place, i.e. the parish. This same fact could lead to the revitalization of the witness of each local Orthodox church within new missionary situations (pluralistic societies, diaspora, socialist context, context of developing churches) by discovering new forms of evangelization and witness. Finally, the Orthodox presence on all six continents would be an excellent starting point to deepen, on a very large scale, and from the mission point of view, questions like the relationship of Church and society, Church and culture, faith and secularization, etc.

### *The Gospel to all Realms of Life*

A witness to love means that the Orthodox churches can intervene in situations judged contrary to the Gospel and to their tradition. Here the imperative is the prophetic mission of Orthodoxy, its duty to “give an account of the hope that is in us” in every

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<sup>11</sup>Par. G,1.

case involving the progress of peace, of freedom, of justice, and of brotherhood, as well as respect for the human person as being in the image of God. During the carrying out of this prophetic mission, the Orthodox churches have an obligation to watch over the peace of mind of their flock, which they are bound to lead on the path of the Gospel. We believe that to do so, it is love that will galvanize the will of the Orthodox churches so that, together with their brethren, the other Christian churches and confessions, and also with other people, they may today bear their witness — a witness to faith and hope — in a world which, perhaps more than at any other time, needs just that.<sup>12</sup>

The Church's yardstick for its witness and presence in the world is the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel is the foundation not only of liturgy and sacrament, theology and prayer, Church and tradition, but of all Christian existence. The strength and the possibilities of the Church in the confrontation with the world spring from the Gospel: its nature, its blessings, its demands, and its promises. For this reason, the Church intervenes in all cases judged contrary to the spirit of the joyful message of salvation. But, like the nature of its mission, such an intervention does not take the form of a barren polemical criticism. It is a "*witness to love*" in the world.

The witness of the Church is made even more prophetic and more persuasive when all Christians work together to preach with words and deeds the lordship of the God of love in the history of humankind and the sacredness of the human person. Here we have an interesting point. Mission and unity are two allied and interlocking forms of the same principle — love.

This is why the gospel message leads the Church to widen the horizon of its humane and philanthropic action beyond its geographical and confessional borders. Helping those who need help and those who face serious problems in their lives is an essential aspect of mission. A mission which, passing beyond self-interest and ideological prejudice, aims at the glory of God.

It is in this manner that one should understand the Church's immense responsibility for combatting hunger and the extreme poverty which today relentlessly pursue — and it is quite

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<sup>12</sup>Par. H,1.

unacceptable — whole populations, especially in the Third World. Such a terrifying phenomenon in our day and age — when the economically advanced countries live in wealth and wastefulness, squandering money on armaments — reveals a serious identity crisis, for two particular reasons:

a) because hunger not only threatens the divine gift of life of whole nations in developing countries, but also annihilates the greatness and sacredness of the human person;

b) because the economically advanced countries, through an unjust and often criminal distribution and management of material goods, not only insult the image of God in every human person, but God himself, since God clearly identifies himself with the hungry and the needy, saying: “As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Mt 25.40).<sup>13</sup>

The text goes even further. Always basing itself on the gospel word, it proclaims the equality of all human beings (Acts 17.26; Gal 2.28) and condemns an inhuman attitude toward one’s fellow human person (Mk 25.41-61; Jas 2.15-16). It does not beat about the bush in speaking of racial discrimination. And it does not stop at racial discrimination. It goes on to uphold the rights of all minorities, clearly showing how to put into practice the teaching of the Church. Just as every person has his own unique role to play in Church and society, so every community has the right to maintain its difference within the unity of a nation or of a country. In the first instance, the document proposes a christological consideration, while in the second it turns to a trinitarian one.

Orthodoxy utterly condemns the inhuman system of racial discrimination and the sacrilegious affirmation that is in harmony with Christian ideals. To the question, “And who is my neighbor?,” Christ replied with a parable of the Good Samaritan. Thus he taught us to abolish every dividing wall of hate and prejudice. Orthodoxy confesses that every person, without consideration of his color, creed, race, tongue, bears within him the image of God and is our brother or sister, an equal member of the human family.

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<sup>13</sup>Par. G,2.

A minority, be it religious or racial, should be respected for what it is. A man's freedom is linked to the freedom of the community to which he belongs. Every community should be free to develop its talents. Pluralism should be a rule in the life of every country. The unity of a nation, a country, or a state should be understood as encompassing the right for human communities to be different.<sup>14</sup>

The Church announces the joyful message; it combats sin and condemns injustice; it suffers with all people deprived of the blessings of peace and justice; it faces up to the serious problem of freedom of conscience, and to the spiritual emptiness which human beings vainly try to fill through consumerism; it stands by those who are marginalized; it consoles widows and orphans. The Church has a particular mission within the world — *a mission in Christ's way* — because “none of the socio-political ideologies, neither human rationalism nor devotion to one's own country, can save the democracy, the social justice, and the so-called human rights. Human egocentrism is very narrow to contain the *other*, particularly the *enemy* and to love him or her as oneself. For this reason, the human development and intellect are satisfied with the *change* of the old, the reversal of the status quo. For the Church such an attitude is an unforgivable minimalism. In the Church the other and the enemy not only are received but also forgiven and included after their metanoia. The result is not a simple change but a true *reconciliation* and a *renewal*, meaning radical transformation of the situation and not any superficial and hypocritical *variation* or *change*.”<sup>15</sup>

However, more reflection is needed in order to clarify the cosmic and historical dimension of the Church's mission that such an involvement gives. It would be of great importance to underline that the task of the Church is not to preserve its religious life but to consider society and culture as real objects of its mission. In other words, the missionary proclamation of the Gospel cannot be an informative preaching as sacramental life cannot stay at the level of individual or congregational experience. They have to become the basic elements of the missionary vocation of the Church, i.e., to induce in the whole world the process of transfiguration.

<sup>14</sup>Par. F,3 and 4.

<sup>15</sup>Archbishop Stylianos of Australia, “The Myths of both Right and Left,” in: *To Vema* (July 17, 1987) 8 (in Greek).



*Witness Among People of the Living Faiths*

The local Orthodox churches, in close collaboration with all the peace-loving adherents of other world religions, consider it their duty to work for peace on earth and the maintenance of brotherly relations between people. The Orthodox churches are called to contribute to inter-religious concord and cooperation, aimed at removing fanaticism of all kinds. They are thus called to work for the reconciliation of all peoples and the preservation of the blessings of freedom and peace in the world for all men today, irrespective of race or creed. It is understood that this collaboration excludes both syncretism and the effort of any given religion to impose itself on others.<sup>16</sup>

In these few lines, there is added to the Church's mission the call to mutual comprehension and cooperation with other religious believers. A comprehension excluding *a priori* all forms of syncretism and a cooperation aimed at the wiping out of every form of fanaticism. The aim of the argument is, again, the defense of the supernatural dimension of humankind, as the image of God. This is, indeed, *the* witness of the Church, flowing from the encounter with the Word of God incarnate.

In spite of occasional efforts to hold unofficial bilateral talks with representatives of other religions, the Orthodox Church seems to avoid, for the time being, broaching the subject of an official theological dialogue between Christianity and other religions. It speaks only of a meeting and collaboration with people whose faith in God and struggle against evil in man and in the world is, directly or indirectly, known.

The question is thus posed from the historical and not the theological viewpoint. The undivided Church embarked on dialogue with the Jews, the Gentiles, and the doctors of Greek philosophy combined with theology. At the root of the dialogue was always the deep bond existing between God's revelation and the human being's attitude to that revelation. For the church Fathers, "The Logos put our world in order through the Holy Spirit and, more particularly, man, this microcosm,"<sup>17</sup> and even many of the pagan philosophers "have

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<sup>16</sup>Par. A,5.

<sup>17</sup>Clement of Alexandria, *Protreptikos* 1.5.

caught a glimpse of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>18</sup> So a constructive inter-religious conversation would not be impossible, given that, for the church Fathers, “there is but one and the same God who, from the very beginning to the end and by various dispensations, comes to the rescue of humankind.”<sup>19</sup>

However, during the course of history, the Church noticed a tendency of religions to turn into ideologies. This became an impediment to dialogue. For ideologizing tends to bring about idolizing, or a moving away from the search for eternal truth.

That is why, in the early stages of dialogue, the Orthodox Church proposes collaboration with the adherents of other creeds and joint service (*diakonia*) of humankind, regardless of race or belief. It is hoped thereby to create communities blessed with freedom, peace and mutual respect. It could also give Christians the opportunity to prove the sincerity of the religious convictions of other people and to bypass the obstacles caused by historical events.

This could be the Church’s mission in this field; for it is a witness to Christ in a deeply divided world — a world for which Christ died and was resurrected in order to unite it.

### *The Church’s Mission: Eucharistic and Eschatological Viewpoint*

The strength the Church draws from the exercise of its mission in the world leads it to see the world from an angle we could call that of “active eschatology.” Christ’s disciples had the privilege of knowing the mysteries of God’s Kingdom and of being led by the Holy Spirit (Mt 13.13; Mk 4.11; Jn 14.17). They thus became the “little flock” who would inherit the Kingdom (Lk 12.32). Therefore, within the Church and, more especially, within the eucharistic experience of the faithful, the eschatological reality is present. But this eschatological reality calls for a certain historical preparation. The disciples were told to become “the salt of the earth” (Mt 5.13), “the light of the world” and “a city set on a hill” (Mt 5.14). Thus, the Church is placed in the very center of history, sanctifying and transforming the world, by being a new creation, creating a new mode of life. At the same time, it is placed at the end of history as a sign of the Kingdom, judging the world (1 Cor 5-6) in the light of the eschatological realities of which the

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<sup>18</sup>Gregory the Theologian, *Oration* 31.5.

<sup>19</sup>Irenaios, *Against Heresies*, 3.12.13.

eucharist is a manifestation.<sup>20</sup> This consideration gives us the strength to keep on praying and to act in the world with the prospect of changing the world and resurrecting the human person in Christ.

God, with a strong hand, is shaping the course of history, while Christians live even now in the Church the eschatological reality of the kingdom of God, looking forward to a new earth and a new heaven. For this reason, even though they are anxious about the extent of evil in the world and struggle to limit it, they do not give way to despair, for they view all things from the standpoint of eternity, looking forward to the resurrection of the dead and life of the age to come.<sup>21</sup>

The document ends with an eucharistic and eschatological vision of things to come, a "creative spirituality": the more the Church participates in making known the fruits of the Resurrection and the mystery of love within the Holy Trinity, the more it should struggle within history against all forms of death and division. The text runs thus:

We Orthodox Christians, having grasped the meaning of salvation, feel it our duty to struggle for the relief of sickness, unhappiness and anguish. Enjoying peace, we cannot remain indifferent to its absence from modern society. Having benefited from divine justice, we struggle for more justice in the world and for the abolition of all oppression. Experiencing every day divine clemency, we fight against every form of fanaticism and intolerance between people and peoples. Continually proclaiming the incarnation of God and the divinization of man, we defend human rights for all men and all nations. Enjoying the divine gift of freedom thanks to the redeeming work of Christ, we are able to announce more completely its universal value for every person and every people. Nourished by the body and blood of Christ in the eucharist, we experience the need to share the gifts of God with our brethren; we feel more keenly what is meant by hunger and want and struggle to overcome them. Looking forward to a new earth and a new heaven, where absolute justice will reign, we struggle here and now (*hic et nunc*) for the rebirth and regeneration of man and society.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Cf. *Didache* 10.

<sup>21</sup>Par. E,3.

<sup>22</sup>Par. H,2.

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## The Royal Priesthood (Peter 2.9)\*

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JOHN CHRYSSAVGIS

THE APOSTLE PAUL, IN HIS EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS (4.11-12), clearly defines the role of the clergy and of the laity in the Church:

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ.

Avoiding the very real danger of clericalism, we too must understand that the ministry or apostolate is not the monopoly of the clergy but the responsibility of all. In a sense, the role of the clergy is to help all fulfil this ministry. The lay faithful are not passive members of the body of our Lord — passengers being blindly lead by the driver-clergy or, at most, some kind of “back-seat drivers.”

We are, all of us, “the body of Christ, and each of us is a member of it” (5.30). Each of us is a living member of the living organism that is the Church. Each person is Christ in his entirety, while the body of Christ is the entire Church. And here there is a fundamental truth: Each of us *is* Christ to the degree that each of us walks and lives as Christ on this earth. Symeon the New Theologian describes this in poetic imagery: “My hand is Christ, my foot is Christ.”<sup>1</sup>

In this precisely lies the authenticity and the authority of a Saint,

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\*Paper delivered by John Chryssavgis at the Greek Orthodox — Uniting Church Dialogue on “The Priesthood” (Sydney, 19/9/85).

<sup>1</sup>Cf. *Hymn* 15. Cf. also a similar image in the poetry of S. Harkianakis, *Η οικειότητα των αινιγμάτων* (Athens, 1983), p. 59.

in the fact that he is [as] Christ. And in living “the life in Christ,”<sup>2</sup> in experiencing the mystery that is the incarnation, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of Christ, in partaking of the sacraments that are Christ, every believer also partakes in the three-fold office of our Lord as king, priest and prophet. No single function can be isolated from the others, just as even clergy and laity cannot exist without each other. The “royal priesthood” includes clergy and laity — together do they comprise the body of Christ, together they realize the mystery of Christ, together they live out the life of Christ. Their distinction is functional, not essential.

All human beings are “called to be saints” (Rom 1.17), called to die and rise with Christ, and to “put on Christ” (Gal 3.27). All are called to become “temples of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 6.19 and 3.16-17) and “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet 1.4). Yet not all are created and called to do so in the same way.

### *King, Priest, and Prophet*

The supreme realization of Christian truth is the manifestation — in the person of every human being created in the image and likeness of God, both male and female — of the authentic ethos of the human person as king, priest and prophet. In each person, the mystery of Christianity is realized. “Recognize your nobility,” say the Makarian Homilies, “your royalty . . . your priesthood.” You are “prophets of the heavenly mysteries . . . sons, and lords, and gods.”<sup>3</sup>

Now the kingly function of man (and I use the word “man” as ἄνθρωπος, as the one who continually looks upward towards God [ἄνω-ὄψις]) expresses the potentiality of man to transfigure the entire world from disorder into order, from chaos into cosmos. Man is divinely noble in origin and in purpose.

The prophetic ethos of man allows one to interpret history as the dynamic realization of a loving relationship between man and God. Man’s mode of existence is revealed as divine, as a response to the manifestation of God’s love.

### *The Priestly Ethos*

It is, however, the image of man as priest that forms the basis

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<sup>2</sup>Title of a treatise by Nicholas Kabasilas, a great exponent in the fourteenth century of the mysteriology of the Church.

<sup>3</sup>*Makarian Homily* 27.4 and 17.1.

of my short paper today. This image endows the human person with the potential of bridging the existential gulf between uncreated and created, between transcendent and mundane, between immortality and mortality.<sup>4</sup> The cosmic liturgy of the Word is celebrated in the whole of creation which is summed up and assumes meaning in the human person<sup>5</sup> who is, in this sense, a microcosm and the mediator between creation and Creator. It is precisely this liturgical — or, to be more precise, this eucharistic — understanding of the world that brings about the transformation of the universe. The eucharist is the liturgy of life where God and man, divine and material, meet and are united “unconfusedly and undividedly.”<sup>6</sup>

This “royal priesthood,” which is innate to mankind, means that *all* are liturgical members of the one body of Christ. In this way, two extremes are simultaneously avoided: on the one hand, a clericalism that disdains equality and, on the other hand, an anti-hierarchical uniformity that does away with a personal “*diakonia*” at the feet of the one priest and Lord, Jesus Christ.

### *The Ordination of Priests*

Now if all the faithful are called to be priests, if everyone is to participate in the priestly function of our Lord, then why is it that the New Testament explicitly asks: “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?” (1 Cor 12.29). What is, then, the purpose of the institution of ordination?

The answer to this question lies perhaps in the fact that the faithful are priests unto themselves and of themselves,<sup>7</sup> whereas the ordained priests have other responsibilities beyond those received by all at baptism. Everyone ought to “become king and priest and prophet in the bath of baptism,” says John Chrysostom.<sup>8</sup> Yet “God hath set people accordingly in the Church: firstly apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers” (1 Cor 12.28). And “how shall they preach except they be sent?” (Rom 10.15). As a sacrament of the Church, the ordained priesthood is not an individual vocation; it is not one

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<sup>4</sup>Cf. C. Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality* (Crestwood, 1984), p. 98ff.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Maximos the Confessor, *Ambigua* PG 91.1305 BC.

<sup>6</sup>Definition of the Synod of Chalcedon (A.D. 451).

<sup>7</sup>Cf. John Chrysostom who says that “we become priests by offering in sacrifice our own bodies” to the Lord (PG 61.411).

<sup>8</sup>*Homily 3 on Corinthians* (PG 61.417).

of the several ministries in the community of the Church. Rather, it is the sacramental manifestation of the ministry of Christ in and for the Church: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you," says Christ to his disciples (Jn 15.16).

Christ is the source of all priesthood. The ministerial priest derives in priesthood not by delegation of the people but immediately from Christ.<sup>9</sup> The royal priesthood and the ordained one are, however, both ways of sharing in the priesthood of Christ, and neither is inferior to the other. Nevertheless, one distinction ought to be underlined concerning the two kinds of priesthood often spoken of: there is no single "general priesthood." The priesthood of the laity is of a different nature and not simply of a different degree of participation in some abstract "priesthood." The difference is qualitative, and not quantitative.<sup>10</sup>

It is crucial to preserve a proper balance and not to blur the distinction between the royal priesthood of sanctity to which all are called and the ministerial or ordained priesthood. It is true that "there is neither male nor female, for [we] are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal 3.28), but although in Christ man and woman are one, they are also more truly themselves: their sexual integrity is maintained to the absolute degree.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, in this text, Paul is in fact thinking of baptism, not ordination. He is, therefore, preoccupied with the royal priesthood, not the ordained one. Women are in every respect as much "kings and priests" (Rev 1.6) as any man could ever be. Each person, irrespective of sex, is able to mould the world, revealing new meaning in creation and spiritualizing matter.

Significantly, the person who expresses most perfectly this royal priesthood is not actually a man but a woman — the Virgin Mother of God. The energy spent on the anti-apostolic proposition for the ordination of women would be of more benefit to all if it were directed to a more fervent devotion to the Theotokos.<sup>12</sup> The Virgin Mary,

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* xlii, 1. Cf. also Gregory the Theologian, *Oration* 40.26, PG 36.396C and John Chrysostom, *On 2 Timothy* 2.4, PG 62.621

<sup>10</sup>The confession of Mogila says of the ordained priesthood that it is "of a different kind" (ἄλλης λογῆς).

<sup>11</sup>H. U. von Balthasar says: "In its origin [Christianity] presents to man and woman a glorious picture of sexual integrity." Cf. "The Christian and Charity" in *Elucidations* (London, 1975) p. 150.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. similar statement by John Meyendorff in *The Orthodox Church* (Crestwood, 1975), p. 4.



however, was never a priest in the ministerial sense.

The ordained ministry is not to be seen as a "profession" which a woman may carry out with equal competence. Nor is it a "privilege" from which women are unjustly excluded. "It shall not be so among you" (Mt 20.26). The hierarchical structure within the Church reverses that of the world — the apostolic minister is not superior but "last of all" (1 Cor 4.9) and servant of all (Mk 10.44). Ordination is by no means a sign of male chauvinistic superiority but a ministry, a service at the feet of the Lord.

Christ revealed himself to us as man, as a real male human person. To believe otherwise is to take the stand of the iconoclasts. For a priest is literally an icon of Christ. We must gratefully and humbly accept his choice, rather than desire to impose ours. If we reject revelation and choose our own, then we have indeed committed a certain heresy (ἄρρεσις = choice) and self-constructed what John Saward would so wittingly call a "docetic transvestism."<sup>13</sup> We would be truly distorting christology and denying the reality of the incarnation.

The ordained priesthood in and for the Church — and not over and apart from it — is the sacrament of the presence of Christ himself in his body and bride, the Church. The priest testifies to the fact that all human life must be offered to God; he is a symbol for all, as Christ is the symbol of our royalty and priesthood.

In conclusion, I would like to quote from a passage of Isidore of Pelusium:

In the Old Testament only the priests were allowed to offer priestly sacrifice; yet during the time of the Passover, everyone was in a way honored by priesthood (in that each person offered a sheep). Similarly, in the New and final Testament, those who are the celebrants par excellence of the bloodless Sacrifice are permitted to offer; yet each person has been ordained priest of his own person — not in order to disobey the ruling authority but rather in order to rule over evil and make of his own body a temple and an altar of purity."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Cf. "Bridegroom and Bride" in *Anglican — Orthodox Joint Doctrinal Discussions* 165, pp. 3 and 9.

<sup>14</sup>Letter 75 to Bishop Theodosios (PG 78.781).

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## The Significance of Second Nicaea

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NICHOLAS V. LOSSKY

ON THE WHOLE, THE ORTHODOX WOULD TEND TO HAVE A GOOD conscience concerning the Second Synod of Nicaea:

a) The veneration of icons, declared to be legitimate by this synod, is prominent in our Christian life.

b) We pay homage to this synod indirectly each year when we solemnly commemorate the final restoration, in 843, of the veneration of images and the triumph of "the faith of Nicaea." We, therefore, tend to feel that since we have never forgotten this synod, our reception of it, in the proper ecclesiastical sense, is full and correct.

This year, we commemorate the twelve hundredth anniversary of Second Nicaea (October 787). On this occasion, it is perhaps not unnecessary to ask ourselves whether we are fully justified in having a good conscience about our fidelity to the true meaning of this synod.

We live in an age in which there has recently developed a great taste for icons; it has become something of a fashion, almost a craze. (In France, not only will you find at least one icon in practically every Catholic and often Protestant church and home, popular magazines print reproductions, advertising uses iconographic themes, and icons are reproduced on wrapping paper in the Christmas period.)

The meaning of this fashion or craze has yet to be discerned. One hypothesis might be that this attraction for "traditional" icons comes from a surfeit due to the gluttonous over-consumption of images (in which human faces — the human person — tend to be ambiguous);

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\*The Father Georges Florovsky Annual Memorial Lecture, Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, 1987.

the attraction for icons might be something like the Prodigal Son's "coming to himself" in the modern world which is secretly hungry for a spiritual dimension in man that might free him from the domination of materialism.

This demand for icons implies a search for meaning in general and for the meaning of icons in particular.

The question of the meaning of icons concerns us directly since we claim never to have ceased to use them. And our claim rests on the conviction that we have ever remained faithful to the Second Synod of Nicaea. Therefore, in attempting to speak about the meaning of icons, we are brought to speak about the meaning, the significance, of the synod and its relevance today.

We use icons in our churches (also in our homes, but insofar as they are a "minor church"). There is, therefore, a connection between the icon and the Church. And indeed, the text of the conciliar decision, the "horos," speaks of icons as "being in accord with the preaching of the Gospel" and therefore "useful to strengthen our faith in the truly real, non-fictitious incarnation of the Word of God."

The text quite clearly stresses the accord or unanimity, or close correspondence between the icons or images and the Gospel preached, or the contents of the Church's teaching.

One remark is necessary, first of all: the text of 787 speaks only of icons, of the pictorial representation of Christ, his Mother, his saints, his angels. This is obviously due to the fact that icons, and only icons, were being challenged or questioned or denied a right of existence in the Church at the time. The Church has always tended to be very economical in her pronouncements, speaking only with reticence whenever it was made absolutely necessary by the challenges of heretical teaching or practice and only when these threaten the fullness of the mystery. In fact, it seems clear that the principle of the correspondence that must exist between the icon and the Gospel concerns all forms of art used in the Church: architecture or the organization of space within the church; movement, i.e., liturgical gestures, postures and forms; poetry, i.e., the composition of liturgical texts (It is only in the minds of the most conservative among us that this artistic activity came to an end in the fourth century? The tenth? The fourteenth century? Or when?); and of course, sounds, liturgical music, its nature and its relation to the texts.

Icons and the other elements mentioned form together one whole: sacred or liturgical art. The specific vocation of this art, as expressed

in connection with the icon by the *horos* of Second Nicaea, is to correspond with the teaching of the Gospel, that is to say, the announcing of the good news of Christ risen from the dead. The vocation of liturgical art in all its forms is to make perceptible to the senses the very reality, the physical reality of the incarnation of the Word of God.

One question arises and it must be faced with honesty in connection with our faithfulness to Second Nicaea. Does our sacred art always correspond to the Gospel we preach? And what Gospel do we preach? If we preach Orthodoxy, that is Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man crucified, dead, risen on the third day, ascended to the right of the Father and sending the Holy Spirit into our hearts, or, that "God became man that man might become God," this is what must be expressed, made perceptible, in our icons and other forms of art.

Our Orthodox witness, or our witness to Orthodoxy, consists in announcing to our contemporary world, the world we are immersed in, that "God became man that man might become God." This means that the fact of Christ's incarnation for the purpose of accomplishing his redemptive work has a significance and consequences which go far beyond beyond a mere reinstatement of humanity in a state similar to the state of Adam and Eve before the Fall.

Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, one of the divine hypostases, assumes humanity and in his hypostasis, in his divine person deifies humanity, recreates creation. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God and were offered union with God. They refused this destiny by seeking self-sufficiency, a sort of divinization, a Godhead within humanity itself. Christ, the Son of God, became man, thereby accomplishing in himself that destiny offered to Adam and Eve: all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt in him bodily (cf. Col 2.9). Man is thus truly deified.

"Bodily"; that means that all material reality, our bodies, and all the environment it is in contact with, is directly concerned. God himself has assumed it and placed it at the right hand of the Father. In becoming truly man, Christ does not merely offer "satisfaction" to the Father for our sin. He brings humanity into a state that never existed before: a total union with God accomplished by God himself in the person of Jesus Christ and offered to all of us who have "put on Christ" (Gal 3.27).

It is in this sense that he is truly the New Adam. Saint Gregory the Theologian has this very daring statement, defying human logic: "It was necessary that man should be sanctified by the humanity of

God" (*Oration 45*).

"The humanity of God" implies a total novelty for the human race, a total inequality between the first and the second Adam. The Fathers of the Second Synod of Nicaea have confessed in the name of the Church, in the tradition, that it is because the person, the hypostasis of Christ is *one* that we can represent his human features in which "the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily" (Col 2.9).

Now, this statement, this confession of the Synod, is not a "restrictive" statement meaning that it is licit, merely "permissible" for Christians to decorate their places of worship with images of Christ, his Mother, the angels, the saints. The implications are much broader and much deeper. Broader, as has been stated earlier, in the sense that it concerns not only pictorial representation but all forms of sacred art. Deeper, in the sense that this "possibility" to represent the person of Christ in his bodily shape in which "the fullness of the Godhead dwelleth," indicates quite clearly that all material reality is concerned (as has been said): it is a proclamation (in visual form) of the destiny offered to man, i.e., deification; and at the same time, it is a proclamation to the effect that if man is deified in Christ, all creation is transfigured in him. Man, called to deification in Christ, is reinstated as king of the new creation, and kingship, as Christ himself has shown to us by his example, is nothing but service. This is what our liturgical tradition confesses in the concluding sticheron of the aposticha of holy Thursday matins: "Instructing thy disciples in the Mystery, O Lord, thou hast taught them, saying: 'My friends, take care that fear does not separate you from me. For though I suffer, yet it is for the sake of the world. Do not be scandalized because of me: for I have come not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give my life as a ransom for the world. If then ye are my friends, ye will do as I do. He who will be first, let him be the last; let the master be as the servant. Abide in me, that ye may bear fruit: for I am the vine of life.' "

In simpler, cruder terms, the first form of service of the men and women who have "put on Christ," who have been grafted on the true vine of life, is to view all creation, all material creation, in its divine light. We who offer the eucharistic offering are thereby committed to discover (or uncover rather) all things, all material things, as God's creation, re-created in Christ.

And naturally, all the things we bring to church, all the things we represent in the church, all the gestures we perform there, all

the words we utter, recite or sing, bear witness to this reality of the new creation. In other words, when we offer the eucharistic gifts, edified by the preaching of the Word of God, the forms we use (or sacred art in all its forms) cannot possibly be in contradiction with what we are called to be witnesses to.

To put it differently, when the *horos* of the Second Synod of Nicaea says that art "is in accord with our preaching of the Gospel" and is "useful to strengthen our faith in the truly real, non-fictitious Incarnation of the Word of God," it should not be understood as a kind of concession (from which stem all sorts of notions such as "iconography is the Bible of the illiterate" . . . ) but as an invitation to contemplate the concrete, practical implications of the reality, the carnal reality, of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is therefore an invitation to take into serious account the responsible character, not only of every word preached in the Church — to this anyone would probably concede: that every word should be spoken to edification, and that idle words have no place in the Church because all words are related to *the* Word incarnate — but also of every sound uttered (the manner in which it is uttered or sung), and of every form of representation of reality, viewed in the liturgical action of the Church in its relation to God in the new Creation.

Now, the question remains entire as to *how* sacred art is to remain true to its vocation. The Second Synod of Nicaea only gives a negative (apophatic) principle: the accord with the preaching of the Gospel. Apart from that, I would be tempted to say that it is for the Church in each place and in each generation to place her human genius at the service of this art. The only condition for this art to be truly liturgical is that those who actually practice it should grow in ecclesial consciousness, renouncing their purely human (= non-God-oriented but self-oriented) personality, seeking to be truly catholic in their consciousness, through unifying their will with the will of God, present in their hearts and therefore in their senses.

The Second Synod of Nicaea deals with the veneration of images. There is no doubt about that. Yet, this is far from being the whole story. However important the veneration of images may be (and it is; images are placed on a level with the preaching of the Gospel, as we have seen), the images are only the visible part of the iceberg as it were.

The less visible part is that images are important *because* they point to the reality of the consequences for the salvation of humanity

of the Incarnation of Christ. Second Nicaea is primarily, above all, a christological synod.

We should never forget that it is the Seventh Ecumenical Synod, the last recognized as such by the Church as a whole (however imperfectly). This is no mere formality (nor an example of the "mystical" use of the figure seven). The Second Synod of Nicaea is truly the crowning of all those that precede.

It is not *primarily* a synod about sacred images as such; it is *primarily* a christological synod in the full sense of the word, i.e., in the soteriological, trinitarian sense of a proclamation by the Church of the nature of salvation offered to humanity: deification.

This is the main feature of all patristic teaching. Now patristic teaching, the patristic writings not as literature but as an ecclesial experience of God, have been revived in our century by a few theologians, one of the most prominent of whom is Father Georges Florovsky. I have no doubt that if he were alive today, in the present context in which so many Christians are seeking to recover a truly traditional understanding of sacred art, he would have advocated a renewed reception (reception is not done once for all — it is a permanent process) of the Seventh Ecumenical Synod, the Second of Nicaea. Although it took place at Nicaea through a pure accident of history, its link with the First Synod held at Nicaea in 325 should be clear to us. (Some old icons have stressed the link.)

It is through our rediscovery of the patristic experience of our faith that we have been able to rediscover the importance of the Second Synod of Nicaea. For this, we must thank men like Father Georges Florovsky. It was therefore appropriate that this year, the year of the twelve-hundredth anniversary of this synod, his memorial lecture should be devoted to this subject.

Father Florovsky was one of the Orthodox who early worked for the Faith and Order Movement (later to become the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC). Today, the main program is the study of the apostolic faith. Our experience is that this study indicates on the part of many a need to rediscover the purity of christology, of the doctrine of the Incarnation with all its proper consequences, in particular the salvational consequences; what is the proper nature of salvation. This is where we all need to witness to what Second Nicaea really has to say to us. In this sense, the whole of the Christian world needs a new reception of this synod in its deepest theological implications.



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## The Social Teaching of Saint Gregory Palamas

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IOANNES E. ANASTASIOU

ENVISIONING SAINT GREGORY PALAMAS AS A HESYCHAST CONFINED TO his cell, as a man of letters engrossed in his writing far from the world and society, many people might not associate him with social teachings. However, this image of the saint is erroneous, since he diligently studied the various facets of human life and concerned himself with social problems. In fact, he became a master of "secular learning" through the help of the Theotokos, to whom he would pray before studying.<sup>1</sup> As a monk he lived for long periods of time in Thessalonike and Constantinople in order to enlighten the hierarchs regarding hesychasm, to expound Orthodox teaching, and to insure the condemnation of Barlaam. His great written corpus shows him as a man of great action. He was actively involved in the politics of his turbulent times and sided with Emperor John Kantakouzenos, an unpopular figure in Thessalonike.<sup>2</sup> In fact, because of his sympathies with Kantakouzenos, Gregory was not accepted by the people of Thessalonike on two occasions when he attempted to assume his post as archbishop of that city. Only after Kantakouzenos had become emperor did Gregory manage to establish himself at his metropolis.

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<sup>1</sup>"Βίος καὶ πολιτεία τοῦ ἐν Ἀγίοις Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ," *Νέον Ἐκλόγιον* (Athens, 1974), p. 222.

<sup>2</sup>At a critical time in the history of Byzantium John Kantakouzenos allied himself with the Turks by arranging the marriage of his daughter Theodora to the sultan. With the help of this political alliance, he succeeded in ascending the throne of Constantinople. When finally forced to abdicate, he went to a monastery, where he ended his days beseeching God's forgiveness for the many evils he had brought upon the people of Byzantium.

As a man of action, possessing a keen knowledge of the world and familiarity with the Scripture and writings of the Fathers, Palamas saw the world around him and made many observations on society, social problems, and the question of wealth and poverty.

First we must note that Gregory was not a social reformer; whatever he says regarding society comes from his Christian faith, from his teaching regarding man's salvation, and from his desire for the spiritual growth of the people. He wished to reshape the faithful within the Church by means of the Orthodox teaching. Thus, it is important to view his social teaching within the framework of Orthodox preaching and not as something separate.

Palamas' social teaching is found in the homilies he gave in Thessalonike based on the gospel passages for Sunday and the feast days. These homilies are resplendent with spiritual insights and references to the dogmatic teaching of the Church. Of these homilies, twenty-two were edited by Sophokles of the Oikonomoi in 1861 and forty-three by Migne in his patrology, making a total of sixty-five.

It is striking that Palamas, the leader of the hesychasts, dedicates only two homilies to topics related to hesychasm, such as the divine and uncreated light.<sup>3</sup> There is also a fleeting reference to Barlaam and Akindynos<sup>4</sup> and a few simple references to words used by the hesychasts. In his wisdom, Saint Gregory knew that the people would not be able to understand difficult topics, such as hesychasm, which were suitable for monastics. His homilies deal with the practical areas of Christian life and guide Christians according to the teachings of Christ and his Gospel.

Saint Gregory also gives us information regarding the people to whom he preached. For instance, he relates that when it came time for the grape harvest, the churches would be empty; although the people should be in church thanking God for the harvest, everyone would be sleeping on Sunday, exhausted from working Saturday evening. Moreover, some people would not go to church either before or after the harvest; others would go to church, but would spend most of their time there conversing, rather than praying, and discussing shopping and business deals. Thus, the house of God would end up being a house of commerce. The church would buzz like a swarm of bees, and so whoever wanted to hear the service would not be

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<sup>3</sup>Homily 34, PG 151.421; Homily 35, PG 151.436.

<sup>4</sup>PG 151.204B.

allowed to do so.<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, as far as morals are concerned, who would guess that two weeks before the feast of Great Lent gluttony, intemperance, commotion, shouting, pornographic singing, satanic dancing, and indecency would reign in the city, but that as soon as the fast began, all that would change.<sup>6</sup>

As far as the people's spiritual state is concerned, however, Saint Gregory has many complaints. "We have," he says, "our conscience, which itself accuses us." Having begun in the first person plural, he then directs his words to the people: "You follow your evil desires; you have abandoned the commandments; you do abominable deeds before God. Every day you get drunk with wine and look for a good time. You spend your nights in uncleanness of soul and body. You live together with cupidity and injustice; you rejoice in plunder. You envy and hate and blame one another; you hate the virtues and their teaching, and you have left yourself exposed to sin. Thus, you are in no position to seek anything whatsoever from God."<sup>7</sup>

He also observes that the Christian Church does not include only simple people, but also, as in Thessalonike, wise men educated in both Greek and Christian literature. For this reason, he says that he does not continuously speak in a very simple style, in order to raise the understanding of the less educated, while not lowering that of those more learned. Thus, whoever listens carefully, even if he is uneducated, can still understand what he says.<sup>8</sup>

What is man, this creature of God? David said, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."<sup>9</sup> Birth itself takes place not only with the travail of the mother, but also with the sorrow of the newborn babies, not only for their future life, but also for that which they feel immediately as they come into the world. For this reason, as soon as they are born they continually cry — something no other animal does. This is because only for us is our life miserable, full of sighs and mourning, as soon as we come from our mother's womb. After birth we are wrapped in swaddling clothes and put in a hollow cradle, similar to that in which we are

<sup>5</sup>Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, *Γρηγορίου τοῦ Παλαμᾶ Ὁμιλίαι κβ.* (Athens, 1861), p. 112.

<sup>6</sup>PG 151.84C.

<sup>7</sup>PG 151.485B.

<sup>8</sup>PG 151.413C.

<sup>9</sup>Ps 50.5 (LXX).

buried. We are made to nurse while we cannot move on our own; the sheep, cattle, and deer walk and jump freely immediately after birth and by themselves suckle from their mother. We, even after we have been weaned, still continue to act foolishly, and many years later arrive at the age of good sense.<sup>10</sup>

Regarding the structure of society, Saint Gregory gives an “economic interpretation.” Each person in society has different material needs; some of them he satisfies by his own work, and others he satisfies by the work of other people, since he himself cannot exercise many occupations, and thus be a secretary, tailor, weaver, builder, doctor, and still practice other arts. Each person has some things he needs from his own work; but he needs yet other things which are supplied by the work of others. For this reason, money was invented; by this useful means a person gives whatever surplus he has from his own work and takes whatever he needs. Thus, our life is organized within our society, and so neighborhoods exist, and man is a social being.<sup>11</sup>

In spiritual life, however, things are different. There is no dealing, and everyone is responsible for achieving his own virtues. However, a person can supplement his lack of virtues by giving to the poor whatever they lack, and the poor are those who have need of material goods. This giving of our extra supply to fill someone else’s needs and of their surplus to supply our needs is what the Apostle Paul calls communion (κοινωνία) of the saints.<sup>12</sup>

God has distributed the whole creation undividedly to all people and has granted it to be used according to their will.<sup>13</sup> God freely gave all goods to all men; however, men did not make these goods common.<sup>14</sup> In the next life “mine” and “yours” will no longer exist; but here in this world men do not pay attention to this. Saint John Chrysostom said something similar, that in this world the cold expression “mine” and “yours” is valid. He develops the theme of common goods extensively and writes:

If whatever belongs to us is the Lord’s, then these things also belong to our co-servants, because whatever belongs to our Lord

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<sup>10</sup>Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, p. 23.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid. p. 71.

<sup>12</sup>2 Cor 8.14.

<sup>13</sup>PG 151.37D.

<sup>14</sup>PG 151.164D.

is all common. Whatever belongs to princes is common; the cities, marketplaces, and walkways are common to all, and all share in them equally. Note the economy of God! So as to put the human race to shame, he made many things common, such as the air, light, sun, water, earth, sky, ocean, and stars; all this he distributed equally as if to brothers. He gave the same eyes to all, the same body, the same soul, the same construction, all from the earth, all from one man. We have other common things, such as the baths, cities, markets, and walkways. Notice how no dispute takes place over the common things, but everything is peaceful. However, when someone wants to grasp something and make it his own, then strife begins. It is as if nature herself were exasperated because, while God brings us together from everywhere, we have dissension and division among ourselves, and we separate ourselves by our appropriating of goods and making distinctions between "mine and yours," that cold expression. Then fighting and injustice takes place. And where appropriation and distinctions between mine and yours do not exist, neither fighting nor dissension is born; so that our common possession which we have inherited is natural to us. Why does not anyone go to court over the marketplace? Is it not common to all? However, we see all going to court over houses and money.<sup>15</sup>

Saint Basil the Great also says similar things in his homily on famine and drought.<sup>16</sup>

Whereas God arranged things in this way, there are faults and evils in men which made things change. Although life is short, death is near and the world is perishable.<sup>17</sup> Even though man was created upright in order to ponder that which is heavenly and lofty, he has the fault of avarice and greediness, which is the source of all evils, such as profiteering, rapine, injustice, and usury; from these come sacrilege, thefts, robberies, and every kind of fraud.<sup>18</sup> Love of money makes man blind, and when he accumulates gold or silver, he feels even poorer, so that the more he accumulates, the more he wants. The whole world is not enough for his greed, since the world is one

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<sup>15</sup>PG 62.562.

<sup>16</sup>PG 31.325.

<sup>17</sup>PG 151.261D.

<sup>18</sup>Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, p. 276.

and greedy people are many. How can one world satisfy their desire?<sup>19</sup> The souls of such men resemble a field filled with thorns, since they pay attention to wealth and the enjoyment of many material things. Thus, they are subservient to Mammon, i.e. to injustice and excess, gold and silver or other such things, and it is impossible for anyone who has money to pray. For this reason the Gospel says that your heart will be where your treasure is.<sup>20</sup>

Men try to acquire money, something which does not benefit the soul at all. Fleshly desires, arrogance, the demands of the earth, all these separate man from God, deaden his soul, and bury it in gold and silver dust. The common dust covers up the stench, while the other dust makes the dead person even stinkier, and even God and the angels perceive this stench. Man is possessed by love of wealth, which is followed by arrogance, trust in wealth, and thus he is dominated by the carnal, earthly, worldly things, and his heart is constantly hardening. Thus, all the care of a wealthy person is consumed by his dress, adornment, luxurious apparel, rich meals, choice drinks, and voluptuous life. The delusion and luxury of the rich even reach to the grave. In order to become even wealthier, rich people behave in an authoritarian and forceful way toward the poor; they increase the taxes of those who work for a living and rejoice in getting ahead. Like wild pigs and bloodthirsty dogs they seize the life of the unprotected poor, and for this reason even the poor cry out against them. Having power in their hands, along with the military and the tax collectors, they tax the poor mercilessly. Rich and famous people seize power in order to do even greater injustices and sins. For this reason Christ said, "Woe to you that are rich and satisfied . . . and woe to you when men speak well of you."<sup>21</sup> Christ will place the rich on the left, and will send them to the fire and will curse them because they were hard-hearted, merciless, and voluptuous in their life. The rich man of the gospel parable saw that his production increased. He did not take anything from other people, but he is condemned because he did not give to the poor. Much worse are those who not only do not give to the poor, but who increase their wealth at the expense of the poor. Such people love excess — the second idolatry according to the Apostle Paul. They are sick from love of money,

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<sup>19</sup>PG 151.41BC.

<sup>20</sup>Mt 6.21.

<sup>21</sup>Lk 6.24, 26.

the cause of all evils — this is true not only of the rich, but of the men of the marketplace. The shopkeepers sell men many harmful things, and they even use false scales.<sup>22</sup> Do you want to see just how bad their greed is? Notice that if one of the elements in the body, such as the blood, is in excess, it brings death; thus, in the soul greediness destroys the grace of God and kills the soul, driving out grace.<sup>23</sup>

How, then, does anyone have prosperity? Whatever goods he has, he received from God. Since he has his possessions from God, he does not have them in order to be proud, but in order to fulfill certain obligations. Just as God gave his goods freely to all men, so men ought to make them common to all, to be useful to their fellowmen by charitable acts.<sup>24</sup> For this to be possible, however, love — the summit of all virtues — is needed. If you acquire all the virtues and you do not have love, all are useless and futile. We should not only appear by our words to be sympathetic to those who suffer, but we should show our sympathy by our works.

The rich men of the parables are not condemned because they cheated some people, but because they did not give of the goods which they had, and which they had acquired legally, because whatever we amass is common to all since we receive everything from the common treasury of God, i.e. from the creation of God. Thus, the greedy person is one who makes his own that which is common, just like someone who takes what is not his. Thus, the one will be punished like a bad servant, and the other will suffer even more terrible things, and no one will escape if he does not help the poor. Let the first put to good use whatever God has entrusted to him, and let the second dispense well whatever he has gathered by bad means.<sup>25</sup>

Listen and sigh, you who see your brother — rather, God's brothers — suffering, and you do not give to those who need goods, housing, clothing, or care, and do not use your extra things to supply the needs of your brothers. I myself am censured by my own conscience, says Saint Gregory, because while many shiver from the cold and are deprived, I am full. Whoever has stored up more than he requires for his everyday needs is worthy of mourning, and so much

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<sup>22</sup>PG 151.489D.

<sup>23</sup>PG 151.492A.

<sup>24</sup>PG 151.164D.

<sup>25</sup>PG 151.164B.



more so are those who try to multiply their savings. While God commanded them to love their neighbor as themselves, they consider their neighbor lower than the dirt, because what else but dirt is gold and silver, which we love more than our brothers? If we do not want to give everything to our brothers, let us not mercilessly keep everything for ourselves.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, do not think that if you do good, you lose out, because the time of doing good works is the time of sowing, and the future life is the time of reaping. Do not despair during the time between the sowing and the harvest, but know that you will again receive your goods many times multiplied. Whatever one sows here, he will harvest there and much more.<sup>27</sup>

Then listen, rich people, and desire blessed poverty in order to become truer inheritors and brothers of Christ than those who are poor not by choice. If the rich person hears that it is difficult for him to enter the kingdom of Heaven, let him know that even Abraham was rich, but he was saved because he was hospitable, a friend of the poor, and not a money-lover. Furthermore, Job, who was tested by wealth and poverty, when he was rich said that he had never trusted in riches or taken pride in his wealth.<sup>28</sup> Let us note that Saint John Chrysostom also refers to these two men of the Old Testament, but observes that their wealth was not in gold or silver, nor in garments, but in animals. That is seen from the book of Job, where it is said that camels, mares, and donkeys were killed, but it does not say that they stole golden treasures from him. Abraham was also rich, but in slaves that he did not buy, since the Scripture calls them family servants (οἰκογενεῖς); he also had sheep and oxen. He sent gold to Rebecca, but he had received it as a gift from Egypt and had not obtained it by violence or injustice.<sup>29</sup>

Saint Gregory says that, if they wish, the famous and rich can seek the glory of God, discipline themselves, curb their inclination toward evil, strive for great virtues, and drive out great evils, not only from themselves but from many others under them. Therefore, they cannot only do just things and exercise self-control, but by many means they can prevent others from doing unjust and licentious things. They can be obedient to the Gospel of Christ and his preachers, and can

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<sup>26</sup>PG 151.57D.

<sup>27</sup>Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, p. 48.

<sup>28</sup>Job 31.24, 25; Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, p. 277.

<sup>29</sup>PG 62.562.

subdue others to the Church of Christ and her leaders, not only by their God-given power and authority, but by their personal example to those beneath them, because people imitate their leaders. If those who are rich, the leaders, scholars, those who took care to study and acquire their own wisdom, wish to be saved, they need more force and care because they are more self-willed.<sup>30</sup> Saint Gregory puts many requirements on the wealthy and the leaders for their salvation.

Among other injustices and wrongs, Saint Gregory deals with lending at interest. At about the same time, Saint Nicholas Kavalas left us his work, *Against Lending at Interest*, and the state took measures in order to ameliorate the situation of debtors. Usury was a serious problem. Saint Gregory has a clear and categorical opinion of those who lend at a rate of interest; he states that those who lend and seek interest are lawless and the worst sinners, because they do not obey either the Old or the New Testament. The New Testament recommends lending without hope of getting back what you have lent,<sup>31</sup> and the Old Testament says not to lend money at interest,<sup>32</sup> praises the person who does not lend at interest,<sup>33</sup> and advises avoiding a city where the squares are filled with usury and fraud.<sup>34</sup> The usurer also detracts from the glory of his city, makes it be blamed for the crime of inhumanity, and thus greatly wrongs his city. Although he is a citizen of the city and gained whatever he has there, he does not use his possessions for the city. He does not want to loan to those without any money; to those who have a little money, he loans at interest, so that the little they have he can take from them with his art. For this reason the prophet associates fraud with usury, and says, "I would wander afar. I would lodge in the wilderness, . . . for I see violence and strife in the city, . . . oppression and fraud do not depart from its marketplace."<sup>35</sup>

Interest is like the viper's offspring that nest in the bosom of avaricious people and foretell the worms of the future from which they will not escape.<sup>36</sup> So much for the rich.

<sup>30</sup>PG 151.180D-81A.

<sup>31</sup>Lk 6.34.

<sup>32</sup>Lev 25.37; Deut 23.19.

<sup>33</sup>Ps 14.5 (LXX).

<sup>34</sup>Ps 54.11 (LXX).

<sup>35</sup>Ps 54.7, 9, 11 (LXX).

<sup>36</sup>Sophokles of the Oikonomoi, p. 47.

On the other hand there are the poor. Who are the poor? First there is Christ, who when he came on earth lived a life without any property and did not only live such a life, but preached it. "So, therefore, whoever of you does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."<sup>37</sup> The other poor people are his brothers. They include the farmer, the carpenter, the shoemaker, the tailor, and whoever by his own effort earns whatever he needs in order to live. If they cast out of their soul the desire for wealth and fame, then they will really be blessed. Those are the poor to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs; about them the Lord said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." They are poor in spirit because they have neither pride, nor ambition, nor love of fame; they are poor of their own will and they suffer poverty with courage.<sup>38</sup>

We may distinguish three kinds of poverty. The first is poverty of estate and life style, when one does not have what he needs to live. This poverty is the opposite of wealth, to which the proverbs of Solomon refer: "Give me neither poverty nor riches."<sup>39</sup> Another poverty is that of the body, when a person eats little and is weak; as the psalms say: "My knees are weak through fasting; my body has become gaunt."<sup>40</sup> The third type of poverty is humility, the opposite of pride.<sup>41</sup> When someone is poor without wanting to be so, he must have the desire to repent, to suffer poverty with courage, and not to complain to God about righteousness, not to bother other people, and to hope in God, for whoever hopes in him will neither be the loser nor ever be ashamed. If he does not limit his expenditures and does not work, but begs or becomes a thief, pickpocket, grave robber, or parasite and liar, ignoble and obsequious, a flatterer in order to gain money, he is far from Christ's beatitude. If someone is willingly poor but is proud of it and not humble, then he does not have poverty of spirit which is laudable; he is near demons because they do not eat or have property, but they have pride. For this reason the Lord said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," that is, those who have within themselves humility and continence and who believe that propertylessness is preferable to all riches. To those belong the

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<sup>37</sup>Lk 14.33; PG 151.140B.

<sup>38</sup>PG 151.180C.

<sup>39</sup>Prov 30.8.

<sup>40</sup>Ps 108.24 (LXX).

<sup>41</sup>PG 151.393B.

kingdom of Heaven. We others, let us acquire friends by means of the Mammon of injustice, that is, by means of whatever we have and whatever extra we have. Those who are poor should be glad because they are brothers of God. If they willingly became poor, with patience and thanksgiving, then let them do this good thing.

Let us be careful, though, because Saint Paul said that not only do the rich stray from the faith, but so do those who have the desire to get rich, because those desiring wealth fall into temptation and are caught in the traps of the devil.<sup>42</sup> So let us not say that we are poor and ask why we are spoken to about love of money when we do not have money. By the very desire for wealth, we have in our soul the sickness and we need a cure. If, however, you say that you do not have this sickness, then show us by your works that you do not seek to free yourself from poverty and that you prefer it to wealth and that you thank God because your salvation is easier because of your poverty. All this aims at the salvation of man.

Saint Gregory also addresses the monks and cites the example of Saint John the Forerunner. He says that he was without a roof, that he ate seeds from the trees and honey from the mountains, and that he had just one garment with a leather belt around his waist. Thus he showed the mortification of his body and the good of propertylessness, whereas we are rich as far as food and clothing; we have vessels and storehouses full of wheat and wine, and bread, and all that we need. If the monks do not have such things, then this is good, because they are fed from the treasury of God; however, if they have property and their own treasury, then this is bad and separates them from the communion of saints. This is because he who fled from the world and has property which he brought with him, or which he acquired while a monk, brings the world with him and never leaves the world, even though he is on the Holy Mountain, Athos. Even if he lives in monasteries which depict Heaven, he pollutes them, and he does not allow them to be better than the world.<sup>43</sup>

All of Saint Gregory's sermons come from Holy Scripture and the study of the earlier church Fathers. Let us keep in mind the zealot revolution in Thessalonike had recently occurred, during which certain social theories concerning wealth and poverty had been developed. In Western Europe during the fourteenth century, there were many

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<sup>42</sup>1 Tim 6.10.

<sup>43</sup>PG 151.512D-13A.

reform movements and social teachings. In the middle of the century the plague or black death came from the East and caused the death of half of the population of some countries and two-thirds of others. It was at that time that John Wycliffe and Jan Hus lived, two religious and social reformers. Moreover, in 1381 the peasant revolution took place in England. This uprising was long in the making; ideas against the rich had been circulating among the people even in verse and the peasants were saying:

When Adam delved the earth and Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman?<sup>44</sup>

It is probable that this upheaval in Western Europe had its echo even in Thessalonike; however, we cannot associate it with Saint Gregory who, as we have seen, derived his ideas from quite different sources. In any case, the fourteenth century was a troubled one, and people were uneasy because the poor sought better living conditions and their rights as people of God. These circumstances coexisted with the teaching of the Gospel and religious views. Thus, even in Thessalonike the ecclesiastical leaders took up the cause of the poor.

As we have seen, Saint Gregory Palamas very vividly expressed the needs of the poor and the injustice of the rich, and stated that goods are common and that God granted them freely. He stressed the obligation of the rich to spend money for the poor, not as charity, but because it is a duty which God and society impose on them. Indeed, were Saint Gregory living today, he would have much more to say. His words would be much harsher, because in our day wealth is not slight or restricted, as in his age; rather there is much more wealth, and it is much more powerful. Wealth governs the world and decides the lot of peoples, nations, and the world itself. The words of Saint Gregory are certainly comforting and are particularly instructive and appropriate for us today.

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<sup>44</sup>G. Macaulay Trevelyan, *History of England* (New York, 1935), p. 239.

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*The Teachings of the Holy Orthodox Church*, Vol. 1, *God, Creation, Old Israel, Christ*. By Michael Azkoul. Buena Vista, CO: Dormition Skete, 1986. Illustrated. Pp. 206. \$13.75, cloth.

Among certain ultra-conservative groups in the Orthodox Church, Father Michael Azkoul's theology has enjoyed wide popularity for a number of years. A few of his writings have also appeared in the mainstream Orthodox press and have made a favorable impression even on those who may not share his particular theological views. I would imagine that his present book, the first of several volumes in an ambitious attempt to summarize the basic teachings of the Orthodox Church, will enjoy great success among his conservative followers. However, despite some very valuable information and insightful observations throughout its pages, I am afraid that certain shortcomings will make the book less successful with a general readership. This is a sad loss.

Firstly, though the book is very beautifully printed and bound, it is marred with some unpleasant problems. The publication information is rather clumsily set out. The editor's preface is almost embarrassingly pretentious. And, most importantly, the text contains endless errors. These errors, I should note, are not merely typographical — though the book abounds in such errors, too. An author is not responsible for the quality of typesetting, nor can he control errors committed by those who typeset. Indeed, these kinds of errors fall on the shoulders of the publisher. Errors in grammar, syntax, and style, however, are within the purview of an author. To cite here an entire, long paragraph of errors would be useless. I can only note that this problem is great enough to constitute a serious impediment in reading the volume. I have seen this author's first drafts, and indeed, since he presents some very useful and important information, he should employ the services of a good editor before turning his work over to publishers who may not be especially skilled in text preparation.

Secondly, while there are very rich materials presented in the book, it lacks a clear synthetic statement. Indeed, I would not dispute the claim that a concise presentation of the consistent teachings of the Church Fathers constitutes in and of itself a kind of theological synthesis; but, at the same time, an explication of the teachings of the Church demands something more than the intuitive, spontaneous synthesis which

a pious Orthodox reader might find. A book of the kind that this one proposes to be — “a comprehensive and clear presentation” of the teachings of the Church — must go beyond the level of expanding on what could easily be characterized as an elucidation of notes from a good graduate seminar in introductory patristics. I am not calling for an innovative theology or something “original” or “private,” things which the author correctly says are not part of traditional Orthodox theology; nor am I calling for a departure from the partistic consensus that the author attempts to capture in his successive quotations and observations. I am simply looking for an analytical schematic which might help the Orthodox and non-Orthodox reader more readily integrate the patristic witness into the contemporary theological world.

I say the foregoing cautiously, not wishing to understate the fact that a comparative theme does, indeed, run through Father Michael’s book. There is always a constant and careful emphasis on distinctions between Orthodox and heterodox teachings, albeit distinctions which, even as a traditionalist Orthodox clergyman myself, I would have to say are at times too simply made, thus misrepresenting the heterodox point of view not intentionally, but by virtue of over-simplification. (And in passing, I should note that this charge of over-simplification is one which can be applied to other elements in this volume, especially the glossary at the end of the text.) A good comparative text, one which arrives at a patristic synthesis which reflects meticulously on the Fathers, Orthodox theological formulations, and heterodox theological thought, must of necessity be complex, at times paradoxical, and even provocative. These are not elements which discount good patristic syntheses; they at times, to be sure, form an indispensable part of these syntheses.

Thirdly, this volume does just what it says it will not do. It presents a personal theology. I have already hinted at this in noting that Father Michael is not always fair in his treatment of heterodox views. This hint becomes an open statement in the book’s treatment of Saint (the Blessed) Augustine, who has always held, despite Father Michael’s unsubstantiated claims to the contrary, a high position of respect in the Orthodox Church. The various theological errors found in some of Augustine’s work are brought together, in numerous references in the book, to paint the portrait of someone who, we are told, may have been a heretic, who may have contributed to the downfall of Western Christianity, and who may have had roots in abstruse Jewish thought or pagan Hellenism. Father Michael’s curious preoccupation with the errors of Saint Augustine, which may disfigure some of the



theological writings of this Father, but which in no way compromise his sanctity and the enduring beauty of the bulk of his writings, betrays a certain personal problem with this figure. One can only speculate that the author's early education in a fundamentalistic Protestant college brought this figure, so important to many reformed theological traditions, into some kind of negative focus. At any rate, so extreme is his view that, violating scholarly propriety, he juxtaposes, wholly out of context, Father Georges Florovsky's comments on a process of "pseudomorphosis" in the theological development of the Church with his own assessment of Saint Augustine. As those of us who knew Father Florovsky and who benefited from his teaching can attest, at no time did he question the position of Augustine of Hippo in the ranks of the Fathers and saints of the Orthodox Church. Suggesting such a thing even by moot juxtaposition is wholly wrong.

I should add that Father Michael softens some of his views about Saint Augustine in an appendix — an addition which must reflect the reaction of other critics to references within the text to Saint Augustine. Here, Father Michael notes that Augustine never had much impact on the Orthodox world, and thus his heretical views did not change the Church's teachings. (We might then ask why such great attention is placed on the "errors" in Augustine's teachings in a book which purports to examine the teachings of Orthodoxy.) He restates his view that the Fathers of the Church who did cite Saint Augustine did not know his writings (a completely erroneous claim). He comments on the sincerity of Saint Augustine, while wondering why some Orthodox writers have ranked him among the saints of the Orthodox Church (and, by extension, questions the authority of the Church to place Saint Augustine in its list of saints). In effect, his appendix attempts to place his personal views on Augustine within the consensus of the Fathers and the conscience of the Church. He fails. Let me illustrate this point in two ways.

While many Orthodox writers have questioned some of Saint Augustine's views (see, for example, Father John Romanides' *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine* [Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1981], even attributing later Western heresies to his theological errors, they have always done so with a certain moderation. This is a point which we should not overlook. It is one which reflects rather negatively on Father Michael's polemical treatment of Saint Augustine. Moreover, there is a popular veneration of Saint Augustine among the Orthodox faithful, especially in Greece, which

belies Father Michael's idea that the saint is an unimportant one. Veneration does not survive in the Orthodox Church (even if it is only a few hundred years old, as Father Michael claims — a point easily challenged by Father's own admission of Russian and Byzantine references to the Saint through the course of many centuries), if it does not express the faith of the people and divine Providence. Nor does it reach the highness of expression that we see in the comments of one very respected Greek writer in his recent book on Saint Augustine, *The Son of Tears: The Divine Augustine* (Archimandrite Theodore K. Berates) [Thessalonike, 1985] [in Greek]: "More than all else that he was, the Divine Augustine was a soul which struggled. . . . In the life of Saint Augustine of Hippo is one of the greatest figures of our Church and, more generally, of history." If, as Father Michael says, Saint Augustine is a figure whom "it would be inappropriate to hold up as a teacher" in the Church, this opinion is largely his and that of a small minority of Orthodox somewhat excessive in their zeal.

As I pointed out earlier, Father Michael Azkoul has produced some very interesting articles and books which have had a positive effect on an Orthodox audience much wider than the conservative circle to which he belongs. He has made some excellent contributions to Orthodox thought, and certainly it must be said that his conservative, traditional approach is very much needed in today's Orthodox world. It is sad, then, that the problems which I have noted compromise the first of his volumes on the Orthodox faith. I hope that such shortcomings will be rectified in the future, because the kind of ambitious project which Father Michael has undertaken could be very fruitful in terms of teaching and elucidating the traditional beliefs of the Orthodox Church. It is a shame that this useful little volume is beset by some serious problems what will no doubt limit its popularity to a very small audience, since the author is an Orthodox writer who is capable of something far broader in outlook and undoubtedly better written and composed in terms of style and expression.

I eagerly await the second volume of this series. Assuming that it is free of personal views or idiosyncratic preoccupations, it could well be a classic in Orthodox pedagogical material. Given my suggested improvements, Father Michael's conservative approach may be the very thing that will make his project enduring and challenging. I would urge all Orthodox to investigate his work.

Bishop Chrystostomos of Oreoi  
*Etna, California*

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## Theology in Encounters: Risks and Visions

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BISHOP DEMETRIOS TRAKATELLIS

DIONYSIOS SOLOMOS' MASTERPIECE OF MODERN GREEK POETRY entitled "Free Besieged" (Ἐλεύθεροι Πολιορκημένοι) contains an exquisitely evocative verse: Τὰ σπλάγχνα μου κι' ἡ θάλασσα ποτὲ δὲν ἡσυχάζουν (My inner being and the sea are never still").

This is a captivating image of human existence in its vibrant, dynamic state, in its search for that which is ideal, quintessential, beautiful, unknown, that which is truly alive. The image is particularly applicable to people of an institution like Hellenic College-Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, and more specifically, to those who are graduating today. This is an hour of great expectation and an hour of transition; it is a time when memories and dreams, plans and uncertainties, resolutions and decisions are in constant motion. The human sea is never still, never at rest . . .

This hour invites reflection, meditation. And the invitation goes to everyone here, not only graduates. All of us share and cherish this moment, and all of us carry an ocean inside ourselves. It is at this time of reflection that I have been given the honor and the joy to present you with some thoughts. They treat a subject dictated by the ethos of this institution, i.e. its theological nature. The scope of the presentation, however, is much larger, and I hope it touches areas close to the hearts of everyone in this auditorium. My topic is: "Theology in Encounters: Risks and Visions."

I shall speak about four major encounters in which theology, or rather the Church and her theology, are deeply involved.

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An address given at the Forty-Fourth Commencement of Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, 17 May 1986.

*The Encounter with Culture*

I shall begin with the encounter of theology with culture. The Church and her theology have always been very sensitive to their cultural environment. "Cultural" here is to be understood in general terms and may also include social, ethnic, geographic, and racial aspects. The product of the Church's awareness and sensitivity is the so-called "contextual theology," which pays serious attention to the cultural context, i.e. to the cultural milieu and reality in which it operates.

In essence, contextual theology starts as an expression of the missionary consciousness of the Church. If theology is to convey the Gospel message, this message should be transmitted in a contextual fashion, i.e. in the language and understanding of the basic, prevailing culture of a given geographical area. Contextual theology, then, would take on different forms in an urban center of a North American megalopolis, in a rural area of Africa, in a densely populated city of India, or in a remote village of Polynesia. Theology, in its encounter with various cultures, becomes contextual in order to be effective.

It is here that the risk ominously surfaces. The risk is that of a theology becoming obsessed with its cultural context, gradually becoming a theology which accomodates its cultural environment. Compliancy seems to be lurking not far away. In encountering culture, the Church and her theology may focus excessively on cultural reality. This could diminish the attention paid to the Gospel message, to the real content of theology. The cultural context could ultimately overpower the theological text. The genuine Gospel message in its integrity may fade away or be compromised for the sake of accomodating a culture.

This risk does not deter the encounter, which must occur. As a matter of fact, it has been occuring from the first moment the Church appeared on earth. The New Testament, written in Greek, is the superb example of such an encounter; the apologists of the second century are another. In the great Fathers of the Church, the encounter of theology and culture produced astonishing results. In the works of Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory the Theologian, and Gregory of Nyssa, for example, we see the Gospel message in its integrity, brilliance, and authenticity presented in the finest cultural context, in the most brilliant, elegant, and sophisticated means of communication offered by a culture and its language.

This is the vision for any given encounter between theology and culture: to transmit the Gospel message intact, whole, unadulterated;

and to present it in the finest means of communication provided by any cultural environment — the perfect communication of the perfect truth revealed by God in Christ and entrusted by him to the Church.

### *The Encounter with World Religions*

The second major encounter I should like to discuss is the one between Christian theology and non-Christian religions.

This type of encounter engages theology in a wide and complicated range of activity. It is not our purpose to analyze them today, but, simply, to draw attention to a particular phenomenon which might emerge in such an encounter. This is the phenomenon of minimalist theology. What is a minimalist theology? It is a theology, or rather a theological tendency, which offers the minimum — the least possible — doctrinal or dogmatic Church teaching when encountering various world religions. In so doing, minimalist theology believes the encounter is made easier, and that the dialogue between Christians and non-Christians is thereby advanced. What we have here is a process of reduction and elimination of truths and dogmas which are stumbling blocks for non-Christians in order to arrive at a common basis, at a mutually-acceptable ground for a meeting and dialogue.

One or two examples at this point are illustrative. In an encounter between Christians and Jews, for instance, minimalist theology would tend to downplay Christology. This has actually occurred. On recent occasions, Christian theologians have somehow minimized the centrality of Christ's resurrection in order to eliminate a strong obstacle to their attempts at creating substantial contacts with Jewish theologians. The same has happened in discussions between Christians and Muslims. The basic and specific characteristics of Christianity were somehow suppressed and ideas like our common faith in one God were emphasized so that common theological ground could be more easily established.

Minimalist theology seems to be a definite risk in any encounter between Christianity and other religions. If we take other religions seriously — and we certainly do as a Church with a long and painful history — then theological minimalism has no place. An encounter cannot be positive if we do not present ourselves exactly as we are. The vision here is not to create an artificial relationship with other religions based on hiding our true identity or our whole set of truths. It is rather our serious attempt to understand the religions of others, to see them as they are and to guide them to see us as we are.

The risk of a minimalist theology could and should be overcome by the vision of a theology which makes a strong and consistent effort to really and deeply comprehend other religions, and encounter them ever in the light of the Church's doctrinal truths and her full, distinctive Christian identity.

### *The Encounter with Political Power*

We now move on to the third encounter: theology and political power. We are here considering political power in a wide spectrum of forms: state power, political processes, various levels of government, political ideologies, even lobbying.

There are numerous encounters with political power in the memory and experience of the Church and her theology. The martyrs remain an outstanding monument of such encounters. Conversely, the so-called "holy empires" and theocratic governments of medieval times present quite a different example.

In the contemporary world, the encounter between theology and political power has produced the phenomenon of political theology. This is a theology which offers a theoretical basis for political action and advocates the Church's substantive involvement in political processes. Such involvement could, on one hand, have a direct effect on political issues by being a strong voice in debates which deal with hot issues susceptible to political manipulation or governmental interference. On the other hand, the involvement endorsed by political theology means running for offices, aiming at positions in the political or governmental hierarchy. The common denominator in all these cases is political action, be it on the theoretical or the practical level, be it the support of a certain bill in the political arena, or the support of a particular candidate.

Here we can see the risk looming on the horizon. Political theology and political action necessitate adoption of a certain stance, a particular ideological position, a partisan politics. This could be a divisive item for the members of the Church. It could be detrimental to the idea of the Gospel's eternal, unchanging truth, to the idea of the Church being above and beyond transitional political parties, opinions, and movements.

The alternative is to espouse a theology which is apolitical, neutral, uninvolved, but this too raises questions. There are political issues which have an enormous impact on people's lives. How can a theology, conscious of its role in the process of salvation, ignore issues of such magnitude and such influential possibilities?

The vision here is of a theology keenly alert both to the risks of political and partisan involvement, and to the dangers of apolitical apathy and withdrawal. This is a theology which stands firm on the ground of the Church's commitment to people. The Church is above politics, but she is absolutely committed to people. Her commitment to people and her faithfulness to God dictate her theological pronouncements on any issue, political ones included. This is an indispensable part of her function as a witness of God. Theology comes to the encounter with political power fully committed to God and to the people, but is extremely reluctant to engage in any form of partisan politics and equally reluctant to adopt an apathetic position, a policy of silent withdrawal.

*The Encounter with the "Human Condition"*

I conclude with the fourth type of encounter. This type has been already mentioned, albeit indirectly. Here, because of its significance, I shall deal with it separately.

The encounter I am referring to is that of theology with the so-called human condition, a state of perplexity, despair, pain, oppression, anxiety, and death. This is a case in which human beings, both as individuals and as a race, are considered in their acute existential crises, i.e. their condition of existential imprisonment in a suffocating and meaningless mundane reality.

The encounter described here could breed a kind of theology which tends to be anthropocentric, totally absorbed by the human condition and its implications. Men and women in existential crisis seem to become the exclusive focus of attention and study of such a theology. Pessimism starts to permeate theological thought, which eventually arrives at an impasse.

The risk in this instance is a theology which, because of its anthropocentric obsession, gradually and perhaps inadvertently, pushes the idea and the reality of God into the periphery and more and more succumbs to a condition of helplessness. The enormity and absurdity of human suffering and existential vacuum become an unbearable burden for an anthropocentric theology which ends up with no hope for the care of the doomed human race. It is not paradoxical that this kind of theology becomes less theology and more anthropology, an anthropology of absolute despair which could ultimately lead to atheism. This has in fact occurred on several occasions in our times.

The Church and her theology are extremely sensitive to the human



condition. They are aware of the existential crisis plaguing the contemporary world, and they know too well that in addition to all other anti-human factors, there are also demonic powers militating against humankind and its salvation.

But the Church and her theology believe in the Gospel, stand up for humanity, and proclaim redemption in uncompromising faithfulness to God. The Church is the Church of God, and theology is the voice expressing God's immutable, dynamic, and redeeming love for suffering humanity. The vision here is one of a theology which encounters the human condition of pain, existential crisis, and desperation with a full sharing in the passion and the ordeal. Here her language is not triumphant, but replete with humility, tenderness, and discretion. At the same time, this theology brings to the encounter the hope and comfort of the God who loves, a God who himself underwent the utmost pain by being crucified, but who completed the drama of crucifixion and death with the unique event of his resurrection.

Saint Paul's Epistle to the Romans is an epistle which in essence confronts the human situation of perplexity and despair. Because he experienced the crucified and risen Lord, Saint Paul was able to write these extraordinary lines: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, 'for thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered!'. . . I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8.35-39).

In dealing with the topic "Theology in Encounters: Risks and Visions," I have delineated four major encounters between: theology and culture, theology and world religions, theology and politics, and theology and the human condition.

My hope was to raise a number of questions pertaining to the life of the Church and her theology, and to give some indication of the magnitude and the difficulty, the fascination and the excitement which accompany theological tasks — tasks in which directly or indirectly, the people of Hellenic College—Holy Cross School of Theology are and will be involved.

These are hard tasks in terms of endurance, wisdom, and love,

but we know that, ultimately, in theology, we are looking for the One who was and is and will be. We are searching for him who is “the Alpha and the Omega,” (Rev 1.8) the beginning and the end, the One who said, “Fear not, I am the First and the Last, and the living One: I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and Hades” (Rev 1.18). We are looking precisely for the Crucified and Risen one. Perhaps he is walking with us, as he did with the two disciples “who were going to Emmaus” (Lk 24.13). Certainly, he is with us. He promised to be with us everyday to the close of history on the planet earth. What we need are eyes to discover him, to see him.

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## Theopascite Language in the Soteriology of Saint Gregory the Theologian

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GREGORY TELEPNEFF

THE USE OF THEOPASCITE LANGUAGE, I.E. THE ATTRIBUTION OF suffering to God, has often evoked passionate debate. Those who have *opposed* it have felt that its use compromises the divine impassibility, thus introducing improper notions concerning the nature of God. Those who have *maintained* the use of such terminology, on the other hand, have pointed out that the salvific efficacy of the cross would be compromised were one to deny its use. Yet there can be no doubt — despite the perplexing stance of some non-Orthodox patristic scholars, including Roman Catholics, who at least ostensibly claim historical continuity with the patristic past<sup>1</sup> — regarding the patristic notion on this theological issue. Saint Cyril of Alexandria, in his “Twelve Anathemas” against Nestorios, is perhaps the most overt proponent of the theopascite concept. It should be noted that the Fifth Ecumenical Synod, in its acceptance of theopascite language and in its rejection of any criticism of Saint Cyril’s “Twelve Anathemas,” merely overtly confirmed what had already been implicitly accepted at earlier synods.<sup>2</sup> And Cyril certainly does not stand alone among the Fathers on this issue. An impressive array of patristic *florilegium* can be

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<sup>1</sup>Briefly discussed in John Meyendorff, *Christ in Eastern Christian Thought* (Crestwood, NY, 1975), p. 224.

<sup>2</sup>I.e., the Third Ecumenical Synod at Ephesos, 431. For a concise discussion of the place of Cyril’s writings at this Synod, see John Romanides, “St. Cyril’s ‘One Physis or Hypostasis of God the Logos Incarnate’ and Chalcedon,” in *Does Chalcedon Divide or Unite?*, ed. Paulos Gregorios *et al.* (Geneva, 1981).

collected<sup>3</sup> witnessing to the fact that this concept was anything but exiguously employed in the writings of the Fathers. Those who do not accept the orthodoxy of theopascism — of course, *properly understood*<sup>4</sup> — should consider the fact that, among ancient Christian thinkers, it was primarily the Nestorians who rejected theopascite terminology.

One must also mention the often-discussed concept of the ἀντί-δοσις τῶν ἰδιωμάτων (*communicatio idiomatum*), a concept directly related to concerns expressed in the use of theopascite language, as well as those concerns expressed by the use of the term *Theotokos*. The “communication of attributes” must be understood as an ontological concept, and not merely as a rhetorical device, as is too often the case. Although some earlier (especially pre-Nicene) Fathers did, perhaps, employ the “exchange of properties” concept in a somewhat rhetorical manner, nonetheless, certainly by the fourth or fifth centuries it was understood to be an affirmation of the ontological unity of divinity and humanity in Christ. It was necessary for the Fathers to insist that the Word of God had not simply been con-joined to a human nature which had suffered on the cross; rather, though remaining impassible in his divine nature, the Word himself was the subject of the suffering in the human nature, which was his very own. It is in this sense that one affirms the “exchange of properties”: suffering may be posited in the divine Logos precisely because he is not simply “united” to humanity in an external manner, but his humanity ontologically exists within and only within the divine hypostasis.<sup>5</sup> (One risks a tautology in order to emphasize the point.)

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<sup>3</sup>Note the helpful study by M. Oksiuk, “Teopashitskii spory,” *Trudy Kievskoi Dukhovnoi Akademii* 1 (1913) 529-59.

<sup>4</sup>In affirming that “One of the Holy Trinity suffered in the flesh,” one does not mean to infer that God suffers in his very essence or nature; rather, the divine Logos, who possesses fully the divine nature, also possesses a human nature by reason of the Incarnation, and it is in this nature — the human nature *of the Logos* — that God is said to suffer.

<sup>5</sup>Later Byzantine Fathers preferred the term *perichoresis* to the *communicatio idiomatum* (though the two are, generally speaking, analogous terms), perhaps precisely because the latter could be misread in a purely rhetorical sense. *Perichoresis*, or permeation one with another of the two natures of Christ, more clearly expresses the idea of a common sharing of life or existence. The natures have their being “within” each other, though without coalescence. Cf. Vladimir Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern*

Among the various church Fathers preceding Saint Cyril whose use of theopascite language is especially prominent, one must certainly mention the fourth-century Cappodocian, Saint Gregory Nazianzos, better known in the Eastern Orthodox Church as "the Theologian." In his writings, Saint Gregory speaks quite explicitly concerning the "suffering God," "God put to death."<sup>6</sup> Yet, relatively little attention has been devoted in the secondary literature to understanding this great church Father's precise use of such terminology. The purpose of this essay, then, is to demonstrate precisely how theopascite language is used in Saint Gregory — to indicate that it does, in fact, express an ontological truth concerning this church Father's understanding of the person (and saving acts) of Christ, and is not simply rhetorically employed. Moreover, at the very inception of this essay we should point out that Saint Gregory's understanding and use of theopascite terminology, with its consequent theological implications, will also be seen to inform certain aspects of his anthropology and ascetical theology. Indeed, it is perhaps only within the larger context of an expansive view of Saint Gregory's entire theological "system" that the vital importance of this concept may be clearly grasped.

A proper grasp of Saint Gregory's christology, particularly within its soteriological context, must begin with certain aspects of his theological anthropology. The *raison d'être* of human existence, for Saint Gregory, is seen in the possibility of attaining *theosis*, man's deification within the context of mystical union with God.<sup>7</sup> Communion with the grace of God occurs primarily through man's noetic faculty, which is thus referred to as a "stream of the endless divine light."<sup>8</sup> Saint Gregory, in his writings, usually stresses the likeness of man's soul to the Divine, a result no doubt of his dependence on some

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*Church* (New York, 1976), esp. pp. 54, 145. It should be cautioned that in Saint Gregory this *perichoresis* in Christ is basically unilateral, the initiative coming from the divine nature, as evidenced by the stress on the one and divine subject in Christ (cf. *Oration* 37.2, etc.), as well as Gregory's preference of referring to the humanity of Christ as existing "within" the divinity.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. *Orations* 45.19, 28; 43.64.

<sup>7</sup>Georges Florovsky, *Vostochnye Ottsy 4-go Veka* (Paris, 1931), p. 114. Cf. also *Orations* 2.22, 29.19, 38.11, 39.17, 45.9.

<sup>8</sup>*Poemata* 1.1.4, PG 37.418.

aspects of Origen's thought. However, his view of man's physical body is much more positive than Origen's. Despite certain passages in Saint Gregory which seem to suggest a Platonic understanding of the body as a "prison" for the soul, these ideas must be understood within the overall context of his thought. It is only as a result of the fall of Adam that the physical body adversely impinges upon the faculties of the soul.<sup>9</sup> Ideally, such a condition is not the proper state of man's spiritual being. "The union of the rational soul with the body aims at making the soul sovereign over the physical body, not by abolishing it, but by drawing the body towards it in an ascending course until the soul spiritualizes it."<sup>10</sup>

As originally created, man existed in a harmonious union of soul and body. Further, he possessed a "natural tendency toward God."<sup>11</sup> However, being endowed with free will, it was the creative task of man to "make goodness his own,"<sup>12</sup> by synergistically appropriating the grace of God. Through his freedom of will, however, Adam fell. The results of the Fall were various, and Saint Gregory nowhere develops a systematic understanding of these results. Nonetheless, several of the Fall's effects on man may be gleaned from his writings: the "death" of both body and soul; a certain separation from communion with God; suffering; and the destruction of the originally harmonious relationship between soul and body, resulting in a deleterious effect of the passions on man's entire being.<sup>13</sup> In sum, there can be little doubt that Saint Gregory views the Fall as affecting the entire ontological condition of man. To employ a term of later patristic provenance, the Fall results in a state of ontological corruption for man. Sin was and is a condition against nature; now, man has occluded his faculty for communion with God.<sup>14</sup> The original harmony between soul and body having been lost, the fallen flesh and its sufferings and passions now "weigh down" and adversely affect the

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. *Orations* 2.23, 38.11. See also Constantine Tsirpanlis, "The Doctrine of Katharsis, Contemplation, and Kenosis in Saint Gregory of Nazianzus," *Greek Patristic Theology*, 1 (1979).

<sup>10</sup> Panagiotis Chrestou, *Partakers of God* (Brookline, 1984), p. 16. This quotation appears to be based upon the text of *Oration* 2.23.

<sup>11</sup> *Oration* 45.8, 9.

<sup>12</sup> *Oration* 2.17.

<sup>13</sup> *Orations* 7.22, 21.42; 40.7; 14.25, 19.13-14; 45.8.

<sup>14</sup> Kiprian (Kern), *Antropologija Sv. Grigoriia Palamy* (Paris, 1950), p. 152.

soul.<sup>15</sup> Whereas previously, prior to the Fall, the power of the soul had been able to pervade the flesh, now the passions of the flesh pervade the soul.<sup>16</sup> The capacity to commune with the grace of God inherent in original human nature, a capacity for communion in which grace was to penetrate and transfigure human nature, has been obstructed as a result of the sin of Adam. Theosis, which was possible to man before the Fall, is apparently only possible to man once again after the Incarnation.<sup>17</sup>

Not only the cause of the Fall, man's will, but the Fall's results as well — man's ontological corruption — must be addressed by the saving acts of Christ.<sup>18</sup> One is reminded, at this point, of the soteriological argument of Saint Athanasios: "penitence does not deliver from a state of nature . . . it only discontinues sin."<sup>19</sup> The premises of this argument coincide with those found in the soteriology of Saint Gregory. Thus, man must be "re-created," "re-fashioned," and "healed" by God. Man's state of ontological corruption must be addressed. God does this by "making our condition his own,"<sup>20</sup> through the incarnation, life, and sufferings of the eternal Word. Our salvation is effected through the "humanity of God,"<sup>21</sup> the human nature of Jesus Christ.

For Saint Gregory, the union of God and man in Jesus Christ is a union *kat'ousian*, not merely one according to "will" or "grace."<sup>22</sup> Regarding the later Chalcedonian formula of the two natures of Christ united in one Person (without mixture, confusion, or separation, etc.), it is interesting to note that Saint Gregory adumbrates Chalcedonian theology — he sees in Christ two objects or natures (ἄλλο καὶ ἄλλο) not two persons or subjects (ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος). Further, "both natures are one by combination (ἐν τῇ συγκράσει), because God becomes man and humanity is deified."<sup>23</sup> "Krasis" in Aristotelian language

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<sup>15</sup>Oration 45.9.

<sup>16</sup>Oration 38.11.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. *Orations* 45.9, 38.11.

<sup>18</sup>Donald Winslow, *The Dynamics of Salvation: A Study in Gregory of Nazianzus* (Philadelphia, 1979), p. 71.

<sup>19</sup>*On the Incarnation*, 6-8.

<sup>20</sup>Oration 30.1.

<sup>21</sup>Oration 45.22.

<sup>22</sup>Epistle 101.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.



signifies a whole-body and reciprocal union of two or more bodies, so that in this union each (body or nature) preserves its own personal essence and its individuality.<sup>24</sup> It is in this sense, and not the Stoic sense of "mixture," that Gregory understands the union of divinity and humanity in Christ. Nonetheless, the union of two natures is an asymmetrical one, to quote Florovsky.<sup>25</sup> There is only one subject, not "allos kai allos," in the dyophysitic Christ. God the Logos becomes man, though with no change in his divine nature, but his humanity is deified in its ontological union with God. "What he was he continued to be; what he was not, he took to himself."<sup>26</sup> And, in this union of two natures, "the higher nature prevails,"<sup>27</sup> so that it is the pre-existent divine Logos that remains the subject in the incarnate Christ.

The Word subsumes a human nature within his divine hypostasis, humanity becomes deified, and yet its human ontological integrity is not abrogated. Even after the union, there is a nature in Christ "which is subject to suffering," as well as "an unchangeable nature, which is above suffering."<sup>28</sup> But Saint Gregory the Theologian is not content to predicate this suffering on human nature alone, for it is not sufficient for man's salvation that a mere man somehow united to God should suffer and die on the Cross. Rather, "we need a God incarnate, a God put to death."<sup>29</sup> For Gregory's use of theopascite language is based upon the essential soteriological premise that God alone can save man. However, God does so through "his humanity,"<sup>30</sup> in the ontological and "essential" theanthropic union between perfect God and perfect man in Jesus Christ, in the human nature of the incarnate Logos. In the Incarnation, "God makes our condition his own."<sup>31</sup>

All of this can be seen more clearly within the conceptual framework of Saint Gregory's anti-Apollinarian polemic. Saint Gregory postulates a full and perfect harmony in Christ for soteriological

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<sup>24</sup>Florovsky, *Vostochnye Ottsy*, p. 115.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid. p. 116.

<sup>26</sup>*Oration* 29.19.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid. Cf. also *Oration* 37.2.

<sup>28</sup>*Oration* 40.45.

<sup>29</sup>*Oration* 45.28.

<sup>30</sup>Cf. *Oration* 45.22.

<sup>31</sup>*Oration* 30.1.

reasons. "That which has not been assumed has not been healed. . . . that which is truly united with God is saved. . . . Adam is completely saved only by complete union with him who has been born in completeness."<sup>32</sup> This is the essential soteriological corollary to the proposition that God alone can save man. Humanity is saved and deified only if it has already been united *in its entirety*, body, soul, and nous, with God, in the theanthropic Christ. Yet, within the context of this argument Saint Gregory affirms another and profound truth. In direct contradistinction to Apollinarios, Gregory maintains that two "perfects," perfect God and perfect human nature, *can* be truly and ontologically united in "one."<sup>33</sup> Apollinarios had rejected such a union for several reasons, perhaps above all because, as a true Hellenist, he could not accept the concept of a union between two perfects. However, once again this must be understood in an asymmetrical sense. There is only one subject in Christ, and for Gregory, Christ's humanity has no ontological existence apart from the hypostasis of the Logos. Only thusly can one understand Saint Gregory's repeated emphasis on the "humanity of God," or on God's "making our condition his own."<sup>34</sup> The post-Chalcedonian doctrine of the en-hypostasization of Christ's human nature within the divine hypostasis of the Logos is remarkably compatible with Saint Gregory's christological premises.

The entire crux of Saint Gregory's understanding of the Incarnation is contained in its goal, the healing, cleansing, and deification of human nature. This must not be understood in a crude "physicalist" manner, i.e., the Word unites flesh to himself and the flesh is, as it were, "automatically" deified. The Word does not make "our condition his own" simply because human body, soul, and nous<sup>35</sup> are physically assumed by or united to the divine Logos. Gregory writes that Christ is "tired, that he may sanctify weakness also."<sup>36</sup> In other words, the Logos must assume not only a complete human substance or essence, but must also assume the *entire ontological condition* of

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<sup>32</sup>*Epistle* 102.

<sup>33</sup>Georges Florovsky, *Vostochnye Ottsy*, pp. 139-42.

<sup>34</sup>*Oration* 30.1.

<sup>35</sup>The nous should not be understood as something ontologically distinct from the soul. The nous is simply the highest faculty of the soul.

<sup>36</sup>*Oration* 37.2.

man in order to heal, cleanse, and sanctify human nature. The entire condition of man must be existentially manifested in the life of the incarnate Logos.

In considering the problems of the manner of Christ's "assumption" of "sin," and the necessity for the suffering on the Cross, the issue of Christ's complete assumption of human nature *and* its ontological manifestation becomes more apparent. Suffering, death, and ontological corruption are the results of sin, and therefore must be addressed in the saving *oikonomia* of Christ. In assuming suffering and death in his humanity, Christ "bears" (Heb 9.28) the effects of sin and therefore can be said to bear sin itself — sin in its resultant ontological manifestation. Within this context, once again the anti-Apollinarian principle, "that which has not been assumed has not been healed," applies. Only in humanity's "complete union with him who has been born man in completeness"<sup>37</sup> is salvation accomplished. Again, for Saint Gregory it is not enough simply to posit a complete human nature in Christ; Christ must assume the entirety of fallen human existence, and assume it in such a manner that, human nature having been so completely and essentially united with the divine Word, it can truly be said to be the Word's *own*. Thus, in refuting a purely juridical understanding of the redemption, Saint Gregory instead concludes that the true purpose of the Incarnation and work of Christ lies in the fact that "man had to be sanctified by the humanity of God."<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Saint Gregory so thoroughly understands the metaphysically real nature of the union in Christ, so emphatically affirms the existence of Christ's humanity only within the divine hypostasis of the Word, that he asserts that the Word's body can also be called "God," "through its union with God."<sup>39</sup> To deny that God has actually, ontologically united humanity to himself would, then, obviate the very basis upon which the possibility of *theosis* exists.

Man's suffering, understood to be a result of sin, makes it *necessary* for Christ to suffer precisely in order to assume the effects of sin, to "bear our sins," to assume the entire "fallen" ontological condition of man. This is why God must be "made capable of suffering, to strive against sin."<sup>40</sup> Given this postulate, it is still possible

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<sup>37</sup>*Epistle* 101.

<sup>38</sup>*Oration* 45.22.

<sup>39</sup>*Oration* 39.16.

<sup>40</sup>*Oration* 30.1.

to ask precisely *how* Christ's suffering, culminating in the death on the cross, is understood as being salvific in the thought of Saint Gregory. Gregory employs two major types of language or imagery in order to portray the nature of the redemptive work of Christ: a cleansing or purification of human nature, and a restoration or re-creation.

Christ is "baptized" with a "baptism of martyrdom and blood" on the cross.<sup>41</sup> Baptism is to be understood as a cleansing, and thus the "baptism" of the Cross is a cleansing of human nature, within the divine person of the Word.<sup>42</sup> The initially-created ontological purity of human nature is thus re-established. Christ "purifies the sins of each, completely cleansing from all bruises and stains of sin."<sup>43</sup> Therefore, a "second communion" is imparted to humanity.<sup>44</sup> Having united humanity to himself, bearing humanity "within" his divine hypostasis, the Word bears the suffering and death which are the *result* of sin. Within Christ's hypostasis or person, the ontological condition of fallen man is cleansed and therefore sanctified in its union with the Divinity. Sin is "cleansed," and sin's ontological manifestation in suffering and death are also cleansed by Christ's divinity, within the hypostasis of the Word. Saint Gregory writes: "The Word . . . takes upon him a strange form, bearing all me and mine *within himself*, that in himself he may consume the evil, as fire does wax."<sup>45</sup> Christ's incorruption "was the cleansing of our passions."<sup>46</sup> In the "mingling" of Christ's humanity with the deifying energies of the impassible Divinity through the law of *perichoresis*,<sup>47</sup> incorruption is mingled with the corruptible; the Impassible is mingled with suffering and death, and of necessity the corruptible and passible are "overcome" and transformed — for, "the higher prevails."<sup>48</sup> This is not, of course, to say that Christ actually suffers in his divine *nature*. Saint Gregory explicitly denies such a notion.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>41</sup>*Oration* 39.17.

<sup>42</sup>Georges Florovsky, "The 'Immortality' of the Soul," in *Creation and Redemption* (Belmont, 1976), p. 227.

<sup>43</sup>*Oration* 40.7.

<sup>44</sup>*Oration* 45.9.

<sup>45</sup>*Oration* 30.6.

<sup>46</sup>*Epistle* 101.

<sup>47</sup>See above, note 5. Also, such texts as *Epistle* 101.4.

<sup>48</sup>*Orations* 38.13, 29.19.

<sup>49</sup>*Epistle* 202.

The Word of God suffers in his humanity, but it is precisely his own humanity, existing only within his eternal and divine hypostasis. In this sense it is possible to assert that God somehow ontologically “participates” in this redemptive suffering.<sup>50</sup>

Christ “represents us in himself”,<sup>51</sup> but this is not simply a substitution, an “instead of us.”<sup>52</sup> Rather, according to Saint Gregory, we suffer with, or even *in* Christ. “Christ was crucified, and crucifying with himself my sin . . . , (so that) we were put to death together with him, that we might be cleansed.”<sup>53</sup> Human nature being cleansed and restored to a state of ontological purity, the “harmonious” relationship originally existing between soul and body is also restored. Gregory is concerned about emphasizing the fact that Christ’s humanity represents that for which God created man from the beginning of creation. The “entire humanity fallen through sin” is “created anew”; man is “re-fashioned” by the “sufferings of Christ.”<sup>54</sup>

Saint Gregory’s writings evince quite an expansive view of the effects of the saving passion. Sin had resulted in a state of passion and corruption for man, which state “divided” humanity.<sup>55</sup> Sin having been overcome by Christ, the (original) unity of man which had been God’s purpose from the beginning is once again (being) restored. “Christ’s blood” is “drawing us together and compressing us into unity.”<sup>56</sup> This is being accomplished in the Church, the body of Christ, where the saving work of Christ is expanded or continued and the deification of human nature is appropriated by individual believers (as we shall see below, above all through the mysteries and the ascetical life). Thus Saint Gregory writes that the “Church of God has been gathered together by . . . the sufferings of God for us.”<sup>57</sup> And Christ is the very source of

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<sup>49</sup>*Epistle* 202.

<sup>50</sup>Karl, Holl, *Amphilochius von Iconium in seinem Verhältniß zu den grossen Kappadoziern* (Tübingen, 1904). Theopascite language in this respect is simply a corollary to an understanding of the real or essential unity of the person of Christ.

<sup>51</sup>*Oration* 30.5

<sup>52</sup>Florovsky, G. *Vostochnye Ottsy*, p. 119.

<sup>53</sup>*Orations* 38.16; 45.28.

<sup>54</sup>*Epistle* 101; *Oration* 33.9.

<sup>55</sup>*Oration* 30.6.

<sup>56</sup>*Oration* 45.29.

<sup>57</sup>*Oration* 21.24.

that unity, by virtue of the indwelling of Christ in each individual believer (cf. Saint Paul), by virtue of man's deification or *theosis*, so that in the end Christ will be "all in all."<sup>58</sup> Given the fact that Gregory sees the redemptive work of Christ as a restoration or re-creation resulting in the initial ontological purity existent at the beginning of creation, it is not surprising that even beyond the ecclesiological implications of Christ's saving acts, Saint Gregory views the redemption in an expansive cosmological sense. The entire cosmos is touched, transfigured, by the sufferings on the cross. The sufferings of Christ are "a purification not for a small part of man's world, not for a short time, but for the entire cosmos and through eternity."<sup>59</sup> The redemption cannot be viewed in isolation from the initial purpose of God for his creation. In Saint Gregory's view of the redemptive sufferings of Christ, anthropological, ecclesiological, cosmological, and, as we shall see now, ascetic or spiritual themes converge.

The suffering of the Theanthropos, Jesus Christ, was redemptive because such suffering could be and, indeed, had to be predicated on the divine hypostasis. Yet, as we have seen, strictly speaking these are the sufferings of an authentically human nature; this is the other and quite necessary pole of the theopascite "paradox." Now, in the thought of Saint Gregory, the sufferings of the Word in his own humanity are not redemptive only by virtue of their being the saving acts of God himself, sanctifying the human existence he has essentially united "to," or perhaps "within," himself; it is also necessary for the individual believer to appropriate the sanctification of these saving acts in his own life. Suffering and death having been taken "within" the divine hypostasis of the Word and, cleansed and transformed, they now acquire a positive spiritual dimension, and have even become potential channels for man's acquisition of grace. "When the enemy, having struggled with Christ, withdrew, vanquished by a nobler flesh which had taken nothing for forty days and forty nights . . . the law of voluntary affliction was introduced."<sup>60</sup> Christ having sanctified even suffering, asceticism now becomes a principle for spiritual transformation and a means of acquiring grace in the life of the believer.

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<sup>58</sup>Cf. *Oration* 30.6.

<sup>59</sup>*Oration* 45.13.

<sup>60</sup>*Poemata* 1.2.10; quoted by L. Bouyer, *The Spirituality of the New Testament and the Fathers* (New York, 1960), p. 345. Cf. PG 37.726.

Previously, through his sufferings, the Word of God had cleansed human nature. This occurred in actuality in the human nature of Christ (and by extension, as it were, in the Church, his body, and in her mysteries), and thus potentially so for each individual believer. The ascetic life has become the principle of ontological renewal, the means whereby the individual believer can spiritually cleanse the ontological corruption of his own fallen nature.

For Saint Gregory, man appropriates the saving work of Christ first of all through the mystery of baptism. Baptism is the illumination of our spiritual understanding,<sup>61</sup> the restoration of the image of God originally created within us, which had been lost through sin,<sup>62</sup> and therefore the source of our purification.<sup>63</sup> Further, Saint Gregory speaks of the eucharist as a real participation in the redeeming passion of Christ; he refers to the "unbloody sacrifice by which we communicate in the sufferings and in the divinity of Christ."<sup>64</sup> This is possible because of the sanctification of human suffering which was wrought by the Word's suffering on the cross, and also through the actual *presence* of Christ in the eucharist.<sup>65</sup> The eucharist is that by which one "is mixed with the sufferings of Christ."<sup>66</sup> But what is most important to note in this context is this link between the sufferings of our Lord and the deification of man. As we have seen, this link informs nearly all aspects of the Theologian's soteriology; indeed, it is a linchpin in the entire system of Saint Gregory's thought. Within this context, Gregory's above references to the cross of Christ as a "baptism" (of human nature) become more readily understandable. The cleansing and renewal of humanity which were accomplished in the human nature of Christ are now possible for all mankind, and are, in fact, being effected within the life of the Church, which is the body of Christ.

The *katharsis* of the human person as expressed in the thought of Saint Gregory the Theologian must not be understood in the Platonic or Neo-Platonic sense of a psychological catharsis. Rather,

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<sup>61</sup>*Oration* 39.20.

<sup>62</sup>*Oration* 40.32.

<sup>63</sup>*Oration* 40.44.

<sup>64</sup>*Oration* 4.42.

<sup>65</sup>Althaus, H. *Die Heilslehre des Heiligen Gregor von Nazianz* (Munich, 1972), p. 186ff.

<sup>66</sup>*Poemata* 2.1.50, PG 37.1389; quoted by Althaus, *Die Heilslehre*, p. 188.

it is an ontological *katharsis* involving the entire person, including the material body.<sup>67</sup> Once again, there is no dualism implied in Saint Gregory's thought. The body has an adverse effect upon the spiritual life only inasmuch as it is fallen. Once the ontological cleansing of the person has been accomplished and human nature has been restored to its original and "pure" state, man's faculties for communion with God are no longer obstructed by the bodily passions. The possibility of theosis, participation in divine grace, is once again open to man. This ontological communion of the entire person with God is concomitant with the concept of the ontological purification which is accomplished through the ascetic life.

Not only is the ascetic life a principle of purification *directly* because of that which has already been accomplished by the sufferings on the cross (and the resurrection) of Christ, but that ascetical catharsis is itself a mystical, yet real, participation in the cross.<sup>68</sup> When within the context of faith one suffers, through voluntary *askesis* or otherwise, he "suffers for and *with* Christ."<sup>69</sup> Once again, this ascetical life of "voluntary affliction," or suffering, has as its ultimate purpose the acquisition of grace, or man's deification, made possible initially by the deification of Christ's own human nature in his life, death, and resurrection, accomplished within the divine person of the eternal Word. In the spiritual life, in "bearing one's cross," Christ "dwells in the heart by the Spirit," according to Gregory, and "in short, deifies [our souls]."<sup>70</sup>

It has been sufficiently demonstrated that, given a proper understanding of the soteriological context of Saint Gregory the Theologian's use of theopascite language (both in terms of Christ's actual redeeming work, and man's appropriation of this in the spiritual life), what this church Father is concerned to affirm is the profound mystery of the Word's *ontological* or "essential" uniting of humanity with (or, to use terminology consonant with Saint Gregory's usage, "within") his eternal and divine person or being. To deny the possibility of affirming theopascite language would not only deny the reality

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<sup>67</sup>Some suggestions concerning the nature of this difference can be found in A. Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition* (Oxford, 1981), and Lossky, *Mystical Theology*.

<sup>68</sup>Bouyer, *Spirituality*, p. 349.

<sup>69</sup>*Oration* 45.23.

<sup>70</sup>*Oration* 2.22.



of the essential unity of the person of Christ, it would concomitantly deny the nature of the redemption accomplished by Christ on the Cross.<sup>71</sup> We have also indicated the broad and expansive understanding of the effects — cosmological, ecclesiological, etc. — of the saving passion of Christ which occurs in the thought of Saint Gregory. The suffering of God incarnate becomes the very principle or *logos*, consequently, for the spiritual and ascetic life; but in a more ultimate perspective, it is the means toward man's deification. It is the principle of the possibility of man's ontological transformation or renewal, the catharsis of the entire person, embracing all human faculties. In short, for Saint Gregory the Theologian, the reality of the saving work of Christ and the ontological and metaphysical consequences of that work are intimately and directly linked not only to redemption from sin, but also to a catharsis and the renewal of man's existential condition, within the context of the ascetic life.

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<sup>71</sup>This raises the issue of a "juridical" versus a "biological" or "ontological" understanding of redemption. It has been discussed often enough in Orthodox literature, and it has been clearly demonstrated that the latter conception of redemption is that found in Greek patristic thought (cf. Lossky, *Mystical Theology*; "Redemption and Deification," in *In the Image and Likeness of God* [New York, 1974]; Florovsky, "Immortality of the Soul," and "Redemption," *idem*; and Romanides, "Original Sin According to St. Paul," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* 4 [1st Series], 1 and 2). One must certainly recall Saint Gregory's vehement opposition to a juridical understanding of redemption. Moreover, there emerges a problem with regard to this juridical notion: the full divinity of Christ no longer become absolutely necessary given the juridical theory's soteriological premises. That is, a subordinationist trinitarian theology can fit well enough into such a juridical soteriological framework. The same is not true of the Greek patristic "ontological" understanding of the saving acts of Christ. Christ *must* be fully divine in order to deify man. Unfortunately, it requires more than a footnote to present properly this issue in its entirety. Because of its importance, we cite it here in passing and direct the reader toward the references indicated.

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## Three Byzantine Commentaries on the Divine Liturgy: A Comparative Treatment

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HIEROMONK AUXENTIOS AND JAMES THORNTON

THE RICH LITURGICAL TRADITION OF THE EASTERN CHURCH has bequeathed to us three important commentaries on the Divine Liturgy, dating from the late fifth to the early eighth centuries: *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* of Saint Dionysios the Areopagite,<sup>1</sup> Saint Maximos the Confessor's (†662) *Mystagogia*,<sup>2</sup> and the *Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation* of Saint Germanos (†733), patriarch of Constantinople.<sup>3</sup> These commentaries merit a comparative treatment for several reasons. First, they fall between two watershed events for the Byzantine Empire: the Fourth and the Seventh Ecumenical Synods. Second, in terms of liturgical development *per se*, Saint Dionysios' commentary comes at a time when the Divine Liturgy had been substantially codified in the Byzantine world, subsequent to the liturgical flowering of the fourth century,<sup>4</sup> while

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<sup>1</sup> *Dionysios the Pseudo-Areopagite: The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, trans. Thomas L. Campbell (Washington, D.C., 1981); PG 3.369-584. [Hereafter, Dionysios.].

<sup>2</sup> In *Maximos Confessor/ Selected Writings*, trans. George C. Berthold (New York, 1985), pp. 181-225; PG 91.657-718. [Hereafter, Maximos.].

<sup>3</sup> Saint Germanos of Constantinople, *On the Divine Liturgy*, trans. [with Greek parallel text] Paul Meyendorff (Crestwood, NY, 1984). [Hereafter, Germanos.].

<sup>4</sup> With regard to the precursors of the genre of liturgical commentators, see the thorough study of René Bornert, *Les Commentaires byzantins de la Divine Liturgie du VII<sup>e</sup> au XV<sup>e</sup> Siècle* (Paris, 1966). Father Bornert, while a careful student of these precursors, fails to see the nexus between Saint

Germanos' work is a reasonable endpoint, it being more than three hundred years before any other liturgical commentary; the eleventh-century *Protheoria* of Nicholas and Theodore of Andida, was forthcoming. Indeed, the first *opus* to have an impact on liturgical studies comparable to that of Saint Germanos' commentary was not written until the fourteenth century: Nicholas Kabasilas' famous *Commentary on the Divine Liturgy*. Finally, these three treatises are worthy of a comparative treatment because, it can be convincingly argued, the two later texts build on one another, constituting a developmental thesis of sorts — something obvious not only in conceptual framework, but a point acknowledged by each writer himself. These acknowledged links between three popular saints have made these texts a virtual trilogy in the minds of Orthodox scholars.

While there is certainly sound scholarship concerning the development of the Byzantine Liturgy to support the appropriateness of the commentaries we have cited, some observers would argue that we have failed to add a fourth text, the catechetical homilies of Theodore of Mopsuestia (written between 392 and 428). Paul Meyendorff, in the introduction to his English text of Saint Germanos' liturgical commentary,<sup>5</sup> feels that the trilogy of texts which we have chosen to examine is incomplete without reference to the Antiochian school of thought represented by Theodore of Mopsuestia. We shall make further comments on this claim in our subsequent consideration of Saint Germanos' commentary, which, according to Meyendorff, was influenced by Theodore. At this point, awaiting our further comments, we shall simply question Meyendorff's argument and point out that Theodore of Mopsuestia does not necessarily correctly and validly

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Dionysios and the later liturgical commentators. He includes the Dionysian text among the Alexandrian catechetical treatises that formed the liturgical commentaries. This curious view of Saint Dionysios' work is shared by Alexander Schmemmann in his essay, "Symbols and Symbolism in the Orthodox Liturgy," in *Orthodox Theology and Diakonia* (Brookline, MA, 1981), pp. 94-95. Fathers Bornert and Schmemmann do not reflect the opinions of most Orthodox writers, and certainly their separation of Saint Dionysios' text from the liturgical commentary is not within the mainstream scholarly convention. We might, however, suggest that Father Bornert was not so much making the conceptual distinction understood by Schmemmann, as he was separating the work of Dionysios from what he saw as distinctly "Byzantine" commentaries *vis-à-vis* an historical convention.

<sup>5</sup> See note 3.

represent the orthodox Antiochian school or the thought of the authors of the three commentaries in question.

We are obliged to note, too, that the idea of a unified development of liturgical thought, such as that which we have suggested in our three texts by Saints Dionysios, Maximos, and Germanos and accepted by Orthodox scholars, is challenged by no minority of scholarly witnesses. As Robert Taft has noted, the liturgical commentaries “. . . are not among our most esteemed theological literature today.”<sup>6</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, in his introductory text on liturgical theology, though a sometimes confusing treatise, leaves the reader unconfused with regard to his assessment of the liturgical commentaries — these commentaries, in his mind, paralleling a decline in Byzantine worship in general:

In the Byzantine epoch the emphasis was gradually transferred from the assembly of the Church to the exclusive and actually self-sufficient significance of the clergy as celebrants of the mystery. The Sacrament was celebrated on behalf of the people, for their sanctification — but the Sacrament ceased to be experienced as the very actualization of the people as the Church . . . No less typical was the gradual development in the explanation of the Eucharist as a sacramental (“mysteriological”) representation of Christ’s life, an explanation which acquired tremendous popularity in Byzantium. This was the replacement of the ecclesiological understanding of the Eucharist by one that was representational and symbolical — the surest sign of a mysteriological reformation of liturgical piety.<sup>7</sup>

Paul Meyendorff characterizes Father Schmemmann’s reaction as one which “. . . sees all this literature in a very negative light”<sup>8</sup> — a mild understatement, indeed. And while his view is perhaps hyperbolic here, Father Schmemmann represents a negative scholarly tradition that we should address, though certainly without

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<sup>6</sup> Robert Taft, S.J., “The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm,” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 34-35 (1980-1981) 45. [Hereafter, Taft, “Great Church.”].

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Schmemmann, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, trans. Asheleigh E. Moorhouse (London, 1966), pp. 99-100.

<sup>8</sup> Germanos, *Divine Liturgy*, p. 39.

overstating this tradition to the point of suggesting that a general consensus of opinion among Orthodox theologians does not indeed exist.

Taft, acknowledging the perjorative context in which Byzantine liturgical commentaries are received, nonetheless assures us that:

. . . only at the risk of one's credibility as an objective student of cultural history could one summarily dismiss so resiliently durable a literary genre as the Byzantine liturgical commentary. And indeed recent research has already prepared the ground for a more nuanced evaluation of this material.<sup>9</sup>

We could argue more strongly, along with other Orthodox scholars (Georges Florovsky, Ioannes Fountoules, Justin Popovich, *et al.*), that the Byzantine liturgical commentaries are not only a "durable literary genre," but that they touch at the heart of Orthodox spirituality. In response to Father Schmemmann and as an addendum to the negative scholarly tradition regarding the Byzantine liturgical commentaries, we would maintain that Byzantine worship is devoid of abrupt reforms and ruptures in spiritual development. Just as the writers of the three commentaries under examination in the present paper are bound together by their acknowledged sanctity as "holy men" or saints within the conscience of the Church, so the Divine Liturgy (and we would stress here the word *divine*) about which they write is encompassed by the divine *oikonomia* and should under no circumstances be submitted to mundane critical analysis. The notion of guided development underlies the Orthodox view of history and ecclesiastical evolution. Let us cite here the words of the Russian émigré theologian, Michael Pomazansky:

The present rule of divine services was already contained in the idea of the divine services of the first Christians in the same way that in the seed of a plant are already contained the forms of the plant's future growth up to the moment when it begins to bear mature fruits, or in the way that in the embryonic organism of a living creature its future form is already revealed. To the foreign eye, . . . the fact that our rule has taken a static form is presented as a petrification, a fossilization; but for us, this

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<sup>9</sup>Taft, "Great Church," p. 45.

represents the finality of the form of growth, the attainment of the possible fullness and finality; and such finality of the form of development we observe also in Eastern church iconography, in church architecture, in the interior appearance of the best churches, in the traditional melodies of church singing.<sup>10</sup>

As Father Pomazansky so succinctly notes, it is implicit in the very understanding which Orthodox have of ecclesiastical reality that the liturgical commentaries of three Byzantine saints should be part of a natural development of liturgical thought within the unified, providential evolution of the divine services — again, a unity of thought and worship acknowledged by Saint Dionysios' successors, Saints Maximos and Germanos, and shared by the Areopagite with his own contemporaries.

In our comparative study of the three commentaries of Saints Dionysios, Maximos, and Germanos, it is not our purpose to provide a careful analysis of the texts, the scholarly apparatuses, or such. Our scope is far more limited. We will offer a cursory summary of each commentary, drawing from the text some unifying central theme or motif. More specifically, we will focus on each respective author's understanding of the primary purpose or function of the Divine Liturgy, in an attempt to reveal the further unity of these commentaries as a whole with regard to their common exposition of the purpose and function of Eastern Christian worship. Our treatment, we should note, will not be confined to the texts themselves; we will also have occasion to examine certain theses put forth in the secondary literature, noting the problems solved or created within this analytical body of material. And finally, as a conceptual framework and tool for analyzing both the primary and secondary texts, we will place special emphasis on the essence-energies distinction championed by Saint Gregory Palamas, the fourteenth-century archbishop of Thessalonike. It will be our final argument that this conceptual tool serves to bring the *corpus* of liturgical commentaries into a critical focus that helps us to understand precisely the commonality of purpose and function that we see in Orthodox liturgical worship.

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<sup>10</sup>Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky, "The Liturgical Theology of Fr. A. Schmemmann," *The Orthodox Word*, Nov.-Dec., 1970, n.p.

*The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Saint Dionysios the Areopagite*

Before examining Saint Dionysios' text, we should perhaps address two important issues: that of who, in fact, wrote this text, and questions concerning the orthodoxy of the ideas set forth in it. Certainly one cannot adequately represent the impact of this commentary on the Byzantine commentators, without first understanding Saint Dionysios as his contemporaries and the Byzantines understood him. Firstly, it should be pointed out that few Fathers in Byzantine times, with the possible exception of Saint Photios — a man of such critical perception that many credit him with the invention of the book review — ever questioned that the teachings contained in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* were anything but those of Saint Dionysios, the disciple of Saint Paul and the first archbishop of Athens. So attuned is the modern ear to "Pseudo-Dionysios" that such a stark statement seems almost incomprehensible; we must, however, recognize it. As late as the fifteenth century, Saint Symeon of Thessalonike, in his treatment of the Divine Liturgy, accepts without question that the writer of *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* was indeed the disciple of Saint Paul, converted by the Apostle of the Nations on the Areopagos. (Indeed, many contemporary Orthodox scholars, with the reservations which we shall subsequently cite, accept the teachings of this text as those of the true Areopagite.) This commentary, then, carried with it, for the Byzantines, the authority and sacred character that one might expect them to attach to such a preeminent figure. We must understand this if we are to grasp the subsequent respect shown to this text by Saint Maximos especially.

How could the Byzantines have mistaken a text which we now know without question to date to the end of the fifth century as the work of a disciple of the apostle Paul? How is it that the man of the genius of Saint Photios the Great failed to show anything more than skepticism in the face of a document that could not have been a product of the epoch in which the alleged author flourished? And can we today actually believe that *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* genuinely contains the writings of the Areopagite? Writing in response to similar questions posed in a popular Orthodox journal, Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi gives us a view of Saint Dionysios' writings that deserves attention:

The fact that written texts of . . . [Saint Dionysios'] . . . teachings post-date his life is taken as evidence that the real Areopagite



did not write them. However, many Fathers have understood that, perhaps being part of oral tradition, they were written and composed after his repose.<sup>11</sup>

This is, of course, an elegantly simple answer to the problem of the Dionysian texts. At first glance, it seems too simple. But all too often modern historiography fails to heed the power and wide presence of oral transmission in textual traditions. Furthermore, even if a scholar is wont to dismiss such reasoning, it well may explain the ready acceptance of the Dionysian texts as the valid teachings of the Areopagite among the Byzantines. Transmission of a master's teaching by word of mouth was ubiquitous in Byzantine monastic communities, and it is not something wholly unknown among Orthodox traditionalists to this day. Moreover, it would certainly account for any anachronisms in the text and for what some commentators have called the text's often incoherent and inconsistent composition.

With regard to the orthodoxy of the teachings contained in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, once again we must exercise caution. It is not uncommon for scholars, for example, to find in Saint Dionysios' treatise monophysite thought and a style and philosophical methodology reminiscent of Neoplatonism. No less a sympathetic observer than Hans-Joachim Schulz says of Saint Dionysios, after providing a rather accurate précis of his understanding of liturgical worship, that he employs a "Neoplatonic intellectual approach."<sup>12</sup> Nonetheless, Schulz also points out that Saint Dionysios may be guilty of nothing more than an extreme Alexandrian bent, noting his immersion into their theological tradition and his simultaneous loyalty to Chalcedon.<sup>13</sup> Along these lines, Bishop Chrysostomos writes:

. . . Though [Saint Dionysios'] writings are extreme examples of the Alexandrian patristic school, and set in language familiar to Neoplatonism, a careful analysis of Neoplatonism and Dionysian thought does not bear out what a cursory view has made *de rigueur* in scholarly circles. We might point out that many

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<sup>11</sup>Bishop Chrysostomos of Oreoi, "Questions and Answers about the Orthodox Faith," *Orthodox Tradition*, 4 (2), p. 60.

<sup>12</sup>Hans-Joachim Schulz, *The Byzantine Liturgy* (New York, 1986), p. 27. [Hereafter, Schulz.].

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.* pp. 27-28.

Orthodox Fathers are called Neoplatonists by those who misunderstand both the depth of patristic philosophy and the intricate nature of Neoplatonism itself. As we have noted, Saint Maximos knew and defended the works of Saint Dionysios. So did Saint Symeon of Thessalonike and Saint Gregory Palamas.<sup>14</sup>

Among Orthodox sources, Vladimir Lossky affirms without hesitation the orthodoxy of the Dionysian *corpus* for traditionalist Orthodox thinkers: “. . . The orthodoxy of the Areopagite writings will never be questioned.”<sup>15</sup>

In a fairly recent doctoral dissertation submitted to the Princeton Theological Seminary and soon to be published, Paul Rorem argues that, indeed, Saint Dionysios should be regarded not as a Neoplatonist or the writer of bizarre mystical texts, but as a Christian exegete. In a very thorough study of biblical symbolism in Saint Dionysios' writings, Rorem makes no judgment as to the accuracy of the biblical interpretations put forth, but he vehemently and convincingly argues that Saint Dionysios “. . . *presented* certain parts of his corpus as expositions of the biblical writings.”<sup>16</sup> This correction of the prevailing notion of the intent of Saint Dionysios — his constantly-stated intent to form his teachings from and to remain loyal to scriptural data — lends credence to another important point developed by Vladimir Lossky, a point which, without such a correction, might seem preposterous, given more popular attitudes towards the Dionysian *corpus*. Lossky argues that Saint Dionysios is “. . . a Christian thinker disguised as a Neoplatonist, a theologian very much aware of his task, which was to conquer the ground held by Neoplatonism by becoming a master of its philosophical method.”<sup>17</sup> In support of this claim, Lossky presents a very compelling quotation from Father Ceslas Péra:

The position of Dionysios with regard to the thinkers of Greece is a relationship not of genetic dependence but of victorious

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<sup>14</sup>Chrysostomos, “Questions,” p. 60.

<sup>15</sup>Vladimir Lossky, *The Vision of God*, trans. Asheleigh Moorhouse (Bedfordshire, England, 1963), p. 99. [Hereafter, Lossky.].

<sup>16</sup>Paul E. Rorem, “Biblical and Liturgical Symbols in Pseudo-Dionysius.” Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, 1980, Princeton Theological Seminary.

<sup>17</sup>Lossky, *Vision*, pp. 99-100.

opposition. He does not speak idly and there is no reason to doubt his sincerity when he mentions having been accused as a paricide for making impious use of the Hellenes against the Hellenes.<sup>18</sup>

The most important theme in Saint Dionysios' writings, one which is obvious in the very title of his commentary on the Divine Liturgy and the heavenly ranks, is the idea that divine illumination is mediated *through* hierarchical relationships. This idea is more intricately developed in *The Celestial Hierarchy*, but it is certainly a central feature in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. As Schulz observes:

According to Dionysios, the function of both the heavenly and the earthly [ecclesiastical] is to mediate the divine illumination that radiates from the Most Holy Trinity, the source of all hierarchies, and descends through the ranks of the angelic world and the ordained priesthood to the believing people, and by means of this communication to lead the people to the knowledge of God.<sup>19</sup>

This system of hierarchical relationships is by no means an adventitious one. As Schulz notes, in Saint Dionysios' system, "... every *allegoresis* (relating of one thing to 'another') is kept within bounds because in every case the meaning of the rite emerges from a 'higher' and never from 'another' irrelevant reality."<sup>20</sup> We see, then, that the mystical bestowal of illumination on the Christian through the

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<sup>18</sup>This passage is cited by Lossky from Ceslas Péras, "Denys le Mystique et la Theomachia," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, 1932, p. 62.

<sup>19</sup>Schulz, *Byzantine Liturgy*, p. 25. We should point out that Schulz does not properly understand, here, "knowledge of God," as it is understood in the mystical theology of the Orthodox Church. Knowledge of God refers to participation in God, not to a contemplative cognitive or even supra-cognitive knowledge of God. Knowledge of God, in Orthodox mystical thought, comes forth out of a spiritual epistemology, in which participation in the divine transforms one's "way of knowing." Indeed, it might be more proper to speak of this new knowing as "knowledge *in* God," rather than "knowledge of God." In this sense, one can see why the common translation of the Greek θεωρία, an aspect of mystical knowledge, as "contemplation" is wholly inappropriate and misleading.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.* p. 27.

Divine Liturgy is, to be sure, correspondingly through the “mediation” of a clerical hierarchy. This mediation is not one of rank and privilege, separating the people from the clergy (a charge which we saw earlier in Schmemmann’s objection to the Byzantine liturgical commentaries); rather, the mediation of the clerical hierarchy is determined by the authentic other-worldliness of the rite itself, by the power of God, and not by some human system of personal privilege — though natural human abilities are, of course, reflected in this relationship. As Saint Dionysios observes:

Nevertheless, we must recall . . . that both that [the angelic] hierarchy and every other hierarchy we are now praising has but the one same power throughout the whole of its hierarchical functions, and that the chief of each sacred order himself receives an initiation in divine things according to his nature, aptitude, and rank. He is himself deified and makes his subjects, according to the merits [or, more accurately, “worth” or, in common usage, “ability”] of each, participants in the holy deification he has received from God himself. . . . To speak truly, there is one to whom all the godlike aspire, but they do not partake of him who is one and the same in the same manner, but as the divine ordinance assigns to each according to his merits.<sup>21</sup>

It is important to note that the Divine Liturgy has an allegorical meaning for Saint Dionysios, though, as we have seen from his own words, this allegorical dimension rises above the mere anagogical and does, indeed, involve the human — even in such a way as to discriminate according to merit or ability — in a real participation in the divine. The ecclesiastical hierarchy, for example, is not simply an analog of the celestial or ontological hierarchy, but describes an actual hierarchy of relationships that dynamically communicate divine illumination to the individual soul. In terms of this spiritual reification of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Father Taft, usually a reliable and deeply insightful observer, leads us away from the essence of the Dionysian understanding of the Liturgy when he comments that:

. . . in the Dionysian system . . . allegorical anagogy predominates: the liturgy is an allegory of the soul’s progress from the

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<sup>21</sup>Dionysios, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, pp. 18-19.

divisiveness of sin to the divine communion, through a process of purification, illumination, perfection imaged forth in the rites.<sup>22</sup>

Though the Liturgy is all of these things for Saint Dionysios, at the highest level purification, illumination, and perfection are not so much imaged in the Liturgy as they are achieved, realized, and actualized within the spiritual power of the Liturgy itself, a power which we will define with greater care in our concluding remarks about the liturgical commentaries. Suffice it to say that Saint Dionysios clearly states of the Eucharist, the very core of the Liturgy, that “. . . it divinely accomplishes the gathering of the initiated into the One and completes his communion with God through the God-given gift of the perfecting mysteries.”<sup>23</sup>

One of the most important observations we can make about Saint Dionysios' understanding of the Liturgy is that it lacks an intentional appeal to a temporal-non-temporal interplay, whether in imagery or in mystical content, between salvation history (the Old Testament exodus and the earthly life of Christ) and the spiritual realm. Taft expresses this lack in terms of the paucity of biblical typology in the Dionysian liturgical text:

. . . There is little room for biblical typology. . . . There is little reference to the earthly economy of Christ, and none whatever to his divine-human mediatorship, or to his saving death and resurrection. . . . There is not a breath about ‘proclaiming the death of the Lord until he comes’ (1 Cor 11.26), or about Christ’s mediatorship, high priesthood, or self-oblation.<sup>24</sup>

Much to his credit, Father Taft does not overstate these observations about the lack of biblical typology in Saint Dionysios, noting that the Areopagite’s entire scheme is aimed at something other than such a typological model. As Paul Meyendorff so accurately states, in Saint Dionysios “. . . the entire liturgy . . . is perceived as an ascent from the material to the spiritual, from the multiplicity of lower existence to the unity of the divine.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Taft, “Great Church,” p. 61.

<sup>23</sup>Dionysios, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, p. 33.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid. pp. 61-62.

<sup>25</sup>Germanos, *Divine Liturgy*, p. 27.

It would not be difficult to argue that Saint Dionysios, rather than following an Origenistic or extreme Alexandrian course in his grasp of liturgical truth and thereby compromising the witness of Christ's earthly mission — the common explication of his silence of things typological —, simply assumes the pivotal role of Christ's earthly life, sacrifice and death and resurrection in the liturgical experience. This is an important rejoinder that we must give serious attention. Would there be a Liturgy, the Eucharist, without these elements? And is not Saint Dionysios' silence on these matters not somewhat overstated? At least with regard to the divine mediatorship and lordship of Christ, one could argue that the Dionysian hierarchies rest on the very efficacy of Christ's divine rulership:

Theology has taught us worshippers that Jesus himself is the transcendently divine and supra-essential mind, the source and essence of all hierarchy, holiness, and divine operation, the divinely sovereign power who illumines the blessed beings superior to us in a manner at once more spiritual and clear, assimilating them to his own light as far as possible.<sup>26</sup>

Furthermore, as is often the case with the Eastern Fathers, what is obvious and essential is often emphasized in silence. Is it not upon this witness of silence that Christian theology at least partially bases its scriptural evidence for the Trinity if not, some would argue, the divine Sonship of Christ himself? As we shall see in Saint Maximos' commentary, in which biblical typology comes more to the surface than in Saint Dionysios, the Confessor never questioned the absence of a profound knowledge of salvation history in his predecessor. Rather, he heeded the message of silence.

### *The Mystagogia of Saint Maximos*

Saint Maximos the Confessor begins his commentary with unqualified praise of Saint Dionysios the Areopagite and his singular contribution to an understanding of the Divine Liturgy in *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. Indeed, Saint Maximos speaks as though one cannot touch on the sacred commentary, enlightened as Saint Dionysios was by the Spirit, stating that he would not dare tread where his predecessor has already walked:

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<sup>26</sup>Dionysios, *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, p. 17.

Ἄλλ' ἐπειδὴ τῷ παναγίῳ καὶ ὄντως Θεοφάντορι Διονυσίῳ τῷ Ἀρεοπαγίτῃ ἐν τῇ περὶ τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς Ἱεραρχίας πραγματεία, καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἱερὰν τῆς ἁγίας συνάξεως τελετὴν ἀξίως τῆς αὐτοῦ μεγαλονοίας τεθεώρηται σύμβολα· ἰστέον, ὥς οὐ τὰ αὐτὰ νῦν ὁ λόγος διεξέρχεται, οὔτε διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐκείνῳ προέρχεται. Τολμηρὸν γὰρ καὶ αὐθαδες καὶ ἀπονοίας ἐγγύς [*sic.*], ἐγχειρεῖν τοῖς ἐκείνου πειρᾶσθαι, τὸν μῆτε χωρεῖν αὐτὸν ἢ νοεῖν δυνάμενον· καὶ ὥς ἴδια προκομίζειν, τὰ ἐνθέως ἐκείνῳ μόνῳ διὰ τοῦ Πνεύματος φανερωθέντα μυστήρια . . . <sup>27</sup>

Despite this disclaimer, Saint Maximos does, in fact, build his liturgical commentary on many of the observations of Saint Dionysios. He retains the sacramental symbolism of Saint Dionysios and certainly shares with him an understanding of the salvific force of the liturgical rite itself. Explicit in his writing, too, is the specific notion of deification and ascent to and union with God through the Divine Liturgy, joining him in perfect harmony with the views of the Areopagite. In fact, as we see in the following passages, many of his observations parallel the very style and modes of expression found in Saint Dionysios:

In this light [the illumination of the soul accomplished and symbolized in the Divine Liturgy], the soul now equal in dignity with the holy angels, having received the luminous principles which are accessible to creation in regard to divinity and having learned to praise in concert with them without keeping silent the one Godhead in a triple cry, is brought to the adoption of similar likeness by grace. By this, in having God through prayer as its mystical and only Father by grace, the soul will center on the oneness of his hidden being by a distraction from all things, and it will experience or rather know divine things all the more as it does not want to be its own nor able to be recognized from or by itself or anyone else's but only all of God's who takes it up becomingly and fittingly as only he can, penetrating it completely without passion and deifying all of it and transforming it unchangeably to himself.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup>PG 91.660-61.

<sup>28</sup>Maximos, *Selected Writings*, p. 206.

In discussing the Liturgy in terms of sacramental symbolism, Saint Maximos concentrates on what he calls the "particular" meaning of the Liturgy (its meaning ἰδικῶς), emphasizing its significance for each individual, for the particular soul. This emphasis on the individual is expressed by the Confessor rather explicitly in the following comment on the grace of the Divine Liturgy: "This grace transforms and changes each person who is found there [in the Liturgy] and in fact remolds him in proportion to what is more divine in him and leads him to what is revealed through the mysteries which are celebrated."<sup>29</sup> It is interesting to note that Saint Maximos, like Saint Dionysios, also speaks of individual differences in the spiritual ascent (" . . . in proportion to what is more divine in him") (proportional worthiness or ability) [ἀξία], in Saint Dionysios, though with far less attention to the rigid hierarchical structures of Saint Dionysios.

It is in his conception of the Divine Liturgy γενικῶς, or in a general way, that Saint Maximos moves away from the anagogical process by which the individual soul participates in the Divine Liturgy, thereby greatly expanding Saint Dionysios' conceptual apparatus. While he does not place striking emphasis on the biblical typology by which Saint Germanos will later characterize the Divine Liturgy, he nonetheless contends that, in a general way, the Divine Liturgy represents salvation history. Paul Meyendorff summarizes this aspect of Saint Maximos' liturgical theology as follows:

. . . Maximos does pay attention to the economy of salvation, for he also sees the Liturgy as representing all salvation history, from the incarnation to the final consummation in the world to come. His approach remains essentially Alexandrian, however, in that he pays little attention to the earthly events of the economy of salvation and emphasizes the incarnation of Christ, to the virtual exclusion of the paschal mystery.<sup>30</sup>

Though these observations are generally accurate, we might argue that the accusation set forth here by Meyendorff against Saint Maximos with regard to an underemphasis on the economy of salvation in his liturgical theology is far too strong and unequivocal in tone. How, indeed, could any writer on the Liturgy be accused of virtually

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Germanos, *Divine Liturgy*, p. 38.



excluding the Paschal mystery? After all, the Divine Liturgy itself rests upon the mystery of the Resurrection. Once more, as in our defense of Saint Dionysios against similar charges, we must invoke the "witness of silence" that characterizes so much of the apophatic theology of the Eastern Church, before which the writings of Saint Maximos might enjoy a less severe treatment than that proffered by Meyendorff. The kind of focus on the Divine Liturgy as a "salvation event" is not to be found in an overstated manner in Byzantine liturgical commentaries. Putting aside expectations of such emphasis and heeding the witness of silence, one comes to a far more balanced view of these commentaries. Such is particularly true in assessing Saint Maximos' attention to the economy of salvation in understanding the Divine Liturgy. Let us examine, for example, a very fair assessment of Saint Maximos' views by Taft:

So for Maximos the liturgy represents not just the *earthly* economy of Christ, but *all* salvation history from incarnation to final consummation. Though basically a disciple of Denys, his originality is seen in the far greater emphasis he puts on the historical economy.<sup>31</sup>

Schulz has also made a rather profound observation about Saint Maximos' divergence from the sacramental symbolic model of Saint Dionysios. He notes that there is an integration of the spiritual with the worldly and a subtle move away from the rigid hierarchism of Saint Dionysios' theology. In Saint Maximos' discussion of the Liturgy, Schulz quite rightly sees an interplay between the worldly and the spiritual which is expressed in a worldly-spiritual bipolarity and in a sense of reciprocity:

The relation of the church space to the realities represented — the cosmos, humanity, and sacred Scripture — and the description of this relation by the words "image," "likeness," and "similarity," show that unlike Dionysios, Maximos makes no effort to develop a *graduated* symbolism of a sacramental or quasi-sacramental kind that *unmistakably ascends* from the reality of the Church to the reality of heaven. We discern his intention rather in the constant emphasis on a "heavenly-earthly" bipolarity

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<sup>31</sup>Taft, "Great Church," p. 71.

within the Church, cosmos, humanity, and so on, which symbolize each other (only) because of this polarity, and this in a *reciprocal* way.<sup>32</sup>

*The Ecclesiastical History and Mystical Contemplation of Saint Germanos of Constantinople*

The short commentary of Saint Germanos of Constantinople is one of the most fascinating of Byzantine documents, if simply because it has been so widely used by commentators on the Liturgy. In fact, it was included in the text of the first *printed* edition of Divine Liturgy. It enjoys great popularity today because it is thought to represent a synthesis of the Alexandrian interpretation of the Divine Liturgy (represented by Saint Dionysios the Areopagite and Saint Maximos the Confessor) and the Antiochian school. Next to the mystical texts of the Alexandrians, presumably permeated by hidden Origenistic presuppositions and an obfuscating emphasis on the ascended Christ over and against the Christ of salvation history, some liturgical scholars juxtapose the writings of Patriarch Germanos. In him, they find a fresh "synthesis" of the Alexandrian school with deliberate attempts to portray the Liturgy as it relates to the life and works of Christ, to an historical dimension, drawn from the more literal exegetical school of the Antiochian Fathers. Acknowledging both Saint Germanos' debt to the Alexandrians and his roots in a new Antiochian-inspired view of the Divine Liturgy, Paul Meyendorff comments that:

Germanos keeps much of this earlier Byzantine tradition, modifying it somewhat, and adds a more Antiochene perspective, far more historicizing and focusing on the human ministry of Christ. This is apparent from the very beginning of his commentary: "The Church is an earthly heaven in which the supercelestial God dwells and walks about. It represents the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of Christ" (ch. 1). Immediately we are presented with this dual approach. As his readers would have been more familiar with the more traditional, eschatological approach, Germanos spends more time on the newer, less familiar interpretation.<sup>33</sup>

Saint Germanos' use of the symbolism of Saints Dionysios and

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<sup>32</sup>Schulz, *Byzantine Liturgy*, p. 44.

<sup>33</sup>Germanos, *Divine Liturgy*, pp. 42-43.

Maximos is obvious, as Meyendorff notes. Even liturgical vestments take on mystical symbolism, the priest, for example, representing the cherubim and their *epitrachelia* the wings of the angels, in keeping with what Meyendorff has called earlier Byzantine images.<sup>34</sup> Thus, even though quotations from these two Fathers in Germanos' text are assumed to be later interpolations, Saint Germanos clearly sees the Divine Liturgy as a counterpart of the heavenly Liturgy. He avoids a hierarchical model in putting forth this traditional view, but the heavenly Liturgy is always and everywhere the prototype for his comments on the earthly Liturgy.

With regard to the Liturgy as a symbol and reenactment of Christ's life on earth, Meyendorff clearly identifies this aspect of Saint Germanos' thought in his direct quotation from the saint. There is no doubt that, with an emphasis not to be found in other Byzantine commentators, Saint Germanos blends the life of Christ into his interpretation of the Divine Liturgy. That he saw this emphasis, however, as something new, or as a departure from earlier commentaries, as Meyendorff suggests, is a claim about which we should be careful. Saint Germanos makes no such claim for his attention to these issues and, as we have pointed out earlier, an exegetical fervor is not absent in Saint Dionysios the Areopagite, too, who states that his commentaries are nothing more than biblical interpretations. That Saint Germanos is more literal about the matter of the earthly mission of Christ and its role in the Liturgy is not an indication of some shift in a conceptual understanding of the Liturgy, but may simply represent a genre of interpretation or treatment. One suspects that an overly hasty identification of Saint Germanos with the Antiochian school of exegesis by some contemporary observers accounts more for this perceived shift in understanding than any intentional attempt at reinterpretation by the pious patriarch himself. Indeed we have a clue to this in contemporary thought about Theodore of Mopsuestia.

Many scholars feel that Saint Germanos' commentary on the Divine Liturgy was influenced by the liturgical theology of Theodore

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<sup>34</sup>An interesting commentary on the mystical significance of Orthodox liturgical vesture, drawing at times from Saint Germanos' commentary, can be found in Archimandrite [now Bishop] Chrysostomos, *Orthodox Liturgical Dress* (Brookline, MA, 1981). There are also, in passing, some insightful comments about the traditional mystical view of the Liturgy developed by the early Byzantine commentators.

of Mopsuestia, who not only placed full emphasis, in his interpretations, on the historical image of the life of Christ in the Liturgy and on Old and New Testament typologies, but who supposedly championed the Antiochian school of typological interpretation. For Mopsuestia, the entire Liturgy becomes a reenactment of the Passion of Christ, placing tremendous importance on "the man Christ." As Meyendorff writes of Theodore's view of the Liturgy, "... Here we see the man Christ who, now risen, serves as our High Priest before the throne of God, but who is still a man."<sup>35</sup> This hyperbolic anthropocentricity at times escapes and, in their haste to draw parallels between Saint Germanos and Theodore of Mopsuestia, they forget two important issues. Firstly, Saint Germanos certainly does not use biblical typologies, as we have demonstrated, without balancing them against the symbolic interpretations of Saints Dionysios and Maximos. Nor does he overemphasize the historicity of the Liturgy or the humanity of Christ.

Secondly, Saint Germanos remains silent about Theodore of Mopsuestia in his commentary. And this he does for a reason. He understood Theodore to be a heretic, condemned, as he was, by the Fifth Ecumenical Synod. And the reason for his condemnation? Nestorianism: an improper understanding of the nature of Christ — an unbalanced view of his humanity. There are, of course, those who have argued that Theodore of Mopsuestia was unjustly condemned by the Church. Such a view is not, however, universally held. As Bishop Chrysostomos has noted, the Orthodox Church certainly does not consider the ecumenical synods in and of themselves infallible. Their infallibility lies in their very survival, through the ages, in the conscience of the Church. If anyone were justified in doubting the condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia, it would have been those contemporary to him. Centuries later, in a spirit of reform, to doubt that the enduring, historical conscience of the Church has contained within itself error — and false condemnation at that — is to question Providence and the guidance and presence of the Holy Spirit which traditional Orthodox theology attributes to Holy Tradition. His Grace continues:

Many modern reappraisals of this figure are the result of such naive and unsophisticated scholarship that one is embarrassed

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<sup>35</sup>Germanos, *Divine Liturgy*, pp. 32-33.

to criticize it, even though it has a certain vogue reputation in some theological circles. Father John Romanides, in an article which almost ridicules this poor scholarship, puts to rest any question whatever about Theodore's guilt. He was without doubt a Nestorian and wholly worthy of absolute condemnation.<sup>36</sup>

In the brilliant article by Father Romanides, cited in Bishop Chrysostomos' foregoing comments, we find evidence of a more empirical kind with regard to the condemnation of Theodore of Mopsuestia. In a stinging and compelling analysis of contemporary reassessments of Theodore's theology, Romanides observes that:

The opinion generally prevails that Theodore's Christology is based on an inductive historical-biblical method which begins by recognizing the full humanity of Christ and tries from this point to solve the problem of the unity of subject in Christ. This is clearly a myth. Theodore, like many others of the Oriental Diocese, is a moralistic metaphysician who applies concepts and definitions to the divine nature and in advance determines what is for God possible and what is not. According to his doctrine of divine relations it is impossible for God to unite himself by nature to human nature. His starting point is not the human nature of Christ, nor is it the biblical witness as history, but rather a definition and limitation of divine nature in terms of a necessity distinguished from will. It is exactly because of this transcendental starting point that Theodore's doctrine of the Trinity has no room for any real distinction between hypostasis and essence. In Cappadocian and Alexandrian Triadology, the reality of the divine Hypostases as distinguished from the divine essence is grounded in the belief that the Second Hypostasis of the Trinity really and truly lived and willed and suffered as a real and complete man and that he really and truly was resurrected in the flesh to become the first-born from the dead. For Theodore there is no need to distinguish between the hypostasis of the Logos and the nature of the Logos because the one person effected by the union of natures not only is not the Only-begotten Son of God . . . , but also *cannot* be an hypostasis of the Trinity. . . . The dogmatic decisions of the Fifth Synod are no different from

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<sup>36</sup>Chrysostomos, "Questions," 4 (3), in press.

those of Chalcedon and any claim that Theodore passes the test of Chalcedonian Christology is unrealistic.<sup>37</sup>

No less an authority than the late Georges Florovsky, in discussing the distinctions and similarities between the Alexandrian and Antiochian exegetical schools, also places Theodore of Mopsuestia in a very negative light:

Furthest from the Alexandrian tradition was Theodore of Mopsuestia, but as a result of his views on theology and his particular brand of humanism, his biblical exegesis is almost devoid of religious significance. It was in his extreme doctrines that the Antiochene school was condemned.<sup>38</sup>

A further observation should be made about the Alexandrian-Antiochian synthesis that we ostensibly find in the liturgical commentary of Saint Germanos. Not only does it seem unwise to imagine that Theodore of Mopsuestia, in his liturgical understanding (or misunderstanding, as the case may be), represents the orthodox school of Antioch, or that he provides a link between the earlier liturgical commentaries and Saint Germanos' treatise on the Liturgy, but it seems equally incautious to accept *prima facie* the idea that the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools were at such great odds in their patristic theology. The somewhat artificial polarity assumed by certain modern scholars is not necessarily representative of the differences that separate the two schools, and certainly it does not reflect the similarities in approach that more thorough students find between the two patristic traditions. Let us once again turn to the words of Father Florovsky:

Both Alexandrians and Antiochenes alike tried to grasp and interpret the "inner" or "spiritual" significance of Scripture. Their disagreement was limited to their methods and did not extend to their goals. This divergence in methodology can be partially

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<sup>37</sup>John S. Romanides, "Highlights in the Debate over Theodore of Mopsuestia's Christology and Some Suggestions for a Fresh Approach," *The Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 5 (19xx) 184-85.

<sup>38</sup>Georges Florovsky, *The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century* (Belmont, MA, 1987), p. 262.

explained by the difference in the philological traditions from which they developed. The distinction and struggle between “allegorical” and “historical-grammatical” approaches can be observed even among the ancient interpreters of classical texts. However, this divergence is primarily connected with the difference in the way that the religious significance of history was perceived by them. . . . Their ultimate goal always remained the discovery and explanation of the meaning of Scripture, whether that meaning was found in the word or in the event.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, when we identify Saint Germanos with an exegetical tradition or school, thereby suggesting that his predecessors in liturgical commentary, Saints Dionysios and Maximos, were not exegetical in their approach, we run the risk of misunderstanding exegesis or of limiting its definition. As we have already said, an argument can be made that Saint Dionysios, at least in terms of stated intent, is an exegete. More importantly, we can argue that the content of exegesis relates not only to a confessional affirmation or principle, but also testifies to a spiritual power, a dynamic and living spiritual “fact,” as it were, from the text itself. This is analogous to an Orthodox understanding of patristics. One not only discovers arguments and ideas in patristic texts, but within the very study of arguments and ideas he finds a “patristic consensus,” the “mind” of the Fathers, that is contained in and yet supersedes mere study itself. To exegesis one might also apply such an understanding. And in that understanding, there is to be found a unity between our three liturgical commentators that rises above methodology, emphasis, and style.

#### *The Unified Witness of the Byzantine Liturgical Commentaries*

Within the three important Byzantine commentaries on the Divine Liturgy that we have examined in this paper, we find a unity of witness — with regard to the purpose and function of the Liturgy — which transcends occasional divergences in style, tone, and thematic emphasis in each individual treatise. Notwithstanding various contemporary scholarly traditions which find significant differences between the two earlier texts of Saints Dionysios and Maximos and the later text of Saint Germanos, we have failed to find ample evidence to support such a charge. There are indeed differences in emphasis

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid. pp. 261-62.

in all of the texts, so that Saint Maximos and Saint Germanos are prone to use biblical typology more often than Saint Dionysios. The tone of these later writers, too, is more consistent with that of patristic writers who develop their arguments within the framework of divine economy or along the lines of salvation history. And Saints Dionysios and Maximos write in a style that is reminiscent of the more profound "mystical" Fathers, inviting images of Origen — though evoking, just as validly, parallels with the mystery language of Saint Gregory of Nyssa —, while there is a certain historical dryness to some of Saint Germanos' passages. Yet, in the final analysis, not a single feature of any particular treatise is missing in another. If Saint Germanos emphasizes the historical dimensions of the salvation experience in the Divine Liturgy, he does so without ignoring the mystical symbolism present in the other two texts. If it can be said that Saint Dionysios understates the historical-biblical dimension of the Divine Liturgy, he does so without wholly disregarding that dimension. It is indeed implicit in his subject, as we have argued. Indeed, even where the course of centuries prompts differences in style among the three writers, the unity of patristic expression is nonetheless everywhere present in their common piety. If one text rings forth with one note and another text with yet a different note, there is always a consonance and symphony in their message.

With regard to the purpose and function of the Divine Liturgy, whatever the divergences in theme, style, and tone among the commentaries, each writer sees the Liturgy as a means by which the individual is brought into direct contact with the divine; the explicit purpose of the Liturgy lies in that encounter, whether it be in terms of an hierarchical ascent, as in Saint Dionysios, or in the bipolar interaction, as in the latter two commentators, between God and man. The greater function of the Liturgy is that of offering the means by which the individual soul is deified, whether that *θέωσις* is couched in terms that apply only to the individual soul, as in the Dionysian *corpus*, or the individual soul in consort with the whole people of God, as we see in the imagery of Saints Maximos and Germanos. With regard to the Divine Liturgy as a genuine encounter with the divine, its preeminent purpose, and as a real participation in the divine (deification), its function *par excellence*, there is no disagreement whatever in our three commentaries.

One might wonder why we find such unity in these commentaries, while some scholarship finds such a wealth of thematic and theological



differences in the very same texts. Firstly, we must say that these three liturgical commentaries are short, written in a very difficult Greek (especially so in the case of Saint Maximos the Confessor, who writes in a particularly eloquent style), and, quite frankly, open to abuse. Much is read into the texts which simply is not there. Many differences and divergences in the text are more likely the result of attribution than careful interpretation — attribution engendered more by what some scholars take *into* the text, because of certain historiographical or theological presuppositions, than by what they take *from* it. Secondly, as we observed earlier in our considerations of each particular text, within Orthodox theological thought there operates a certain principle of commonality in belief. What has stood the test of time persists in the *corpus* of Orthodox literature because it belongs to that which is accepted into the consciousness of the Church [ἡ γενικὴ συνείδησις τῆς ἐκκλησίας], the “mind” of the Fathers, the φρόνημα τῶν Πατέρων, “golden thread,” as Father Florovsky calls it, that unites the Orthodox Fathers of today with their predecessors in the past in a oneness of thought and faith. One is thus more reticent, in the context of Orthodox scholarship, to find differences and opposition in enduring patristic texts than he might be in a more general scholarly context.

Thirdly, we would contend that many scholars find opposition and divergences in these three liturgical commentaries simply because they do not embrace the unifying theological assumption upon which each of them is based. Not only do the authors of these commentaries share a common understanding of the purpose and function of the Divine Liturgy, but they also understand the whole divine economy in a unity of Orthodox theological thought that scholars do not always grasp. We have contended that the function of the Divine Liturgy is to provide for the deification of the human being: *theosis*. Because this central theological notion is usually associated with the Palamite controversy of the fourteenth century, many non-Orthodox scholars believe, and quite wrongly so, that Saint Gregory Palamas’ ideas and concepts are innovative and unique to his epoch. They thus fail to take seriously Palamas’ own statements to the effect that he is simply reflecting a long patristic tradition of the Eastern Church. They ignore the theme of θεοποίησις in the early church Fathers and fail to acknowledge the obvious significance of constant and clear references to deification in the Byzantine liturgical texts. In fact, *theosis* as sought by the hesychastic aspirants of the fourteenth century is the same deification to which one attains in the course of

liturgical growth as set forth by the liturgical commentators.

Once we come to realize the nexus between Palamite thought and the theology of the commentators on the Divine Liturgy, we can expand our thinking about the interplay between the divine and the worldly in the liturgical sphere. As in the theology of deification proper, where a sharp distinction is made between the transcendent divine (the essence of God) and the fully divine, but limited energies of God, the liturgical commentators deal continually with a balance between participation in God's energies and the spiritual vision of the unknowable God in the awesome aspects of worship. It is this tension which modern observers often mistake for a certain ambiguity in liturgical commentaries or which they misinterpret, as it is differentially expressed or manifested in each liturgical commentator, as a divergency in thought or theological conceptualization. This is a very subtle point and one which can only be fully appreciated by those who take with sufficient seriousness the implications of deification language in the liturgical commentators and who understand the tradition of essence-energies distinctions, though in varying nomenclatures, in the whole of the Eastern Christian patristic witness, if not Old and New Testamental texts, as some Eastern Fathers would claim.

It behooves us to explain our understanding of the motivations which underlie the observations of some heterodox scholars, who see in the Byzantine commentaries a liturgical image at odds with that of most Orthodox scholars. Certainly such scholars are not unable to grasp the points which we have put forth in the context of Orthodox scholarship. And equally certain, in an age of cordial exchange between religious traditions that encourage an objective view of the religious and theological presumptions of others, they foster no sectarian resistance to looking at traditional views of the Divine Liturgy in the Eastern Church. Rather, we think that there is a conceptual misunderstanding of the Orthodox view of the unity of patristic thought about the Liturgy. If, to be sure, one courts the idea that the Divine Liturgy is integrally entwined with the salvation process and that liturgical rites and acts contain within themselves revealed spiritual powers — if, indeed, the earthly Liturgy participates in and reflects the reality of the heavenly Liturgy — , it becomes impossible to speak of liturgical reform in the contemporary sense, of “creating presence,” or of the liturgical experimentation that we see in much of the Western Church. The acceptance of our understanding of Liturgy obviates much of what is today popular liturgical study for Western Christians.

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C O T R 32 (87)

*Τὸ Μυστήριον τοῦ θανάτου* [The Mystery of Death]. By Nikolaos P. Vasiliades. 4th edition. Athens: Sotir Brotherhood of Theologians, 1980, pp. 564.

Nikolaos Vasiliades has offered a great service to contemporary Orthodox theology by dealing in a most extensive and detailed manner with one of the most provocative issues of all time — death. In his massive book he deals with painstaking care with all aspects of death, and presents an Orthodox understanding based on solid scriptural and patristic grounds. To be sure, the author does not follow the usual academic style; he writes rather in a “lyrical” way, which inspires both scholars and laymen, and rightly so; for he deals with a subject which still remains a mystery. Thus he correctly entitles his book, *The Mystery of Death*. At a time when few people talk about death, when even Christian theologians hold vague concepts about it: life after death, the resurrection of the dead, the existence or non-existence of the devil, and when scientists purposely ignore the impact of death on our lives, a book such as this, indeed fills a great gap. This is why this book became an instant success and has been reprinted often. Hopefully, an English translation will be forthcoming.

Mr. Vasiliades approaches the subject with the fear of God and respect for the Holy Spirit, fully in command of both Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. He raises serious questions which demand serious answers. For example, how will the resurrection of the dead take place and when? When will the final and general judgment take place? Is there an eternal hell and punishment? What is paradise like? What is the nature of eschatology and the renewal of this world? The author divides his book into thirty major chapters, together with a good introduction and bibliography. He discusses extensively how death entered into the world through original sin and the fall, and how death was transformed through God's love for our own good and benefit; he explores most efficiently the redeeming role of Christ's incarnation, and he points to Saint John Chrysostom who correctly says, "the death of the Lord put death to death"; and he successfully discusses the teaching of the Church concerning the Lord's descent into Hades.

Although for Christians death remains a mystery, and many still fear it, nonetheless for them death and the expectation of death take on a different meaning. Remaining a horrible and terrible mystery, as Saint John Chrysostom writes, death brings about unspeakable joy because it transfers us to a brighter life, to the beginning of the everlasting delights of Paradise; and to the heavenly house of the Lord which is full of his incorruptible glory. As Saint Makarios puts it, the devil must lament, but not Christians who through death are led to eternal blessedness.

Here the importance of the "remembrance of death" must be stressed as contributing to spiritual development. Not only does it remind us of the equality of all people on earth with regard to death — for there is no distinction before it between the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor, and the just and the sinful, but it also helps make us better disciples of Christ, as Saint Ignatios of Antioch wrote in his letter to the Church of Rome.

Mr. Vasiliades also treats extensively the attitude of early and later Christians towards the dead. He describes the Christian tradition of the preparation of the body and the meaning of the beautiful funeral service of the Orthodox Church. In addition, he speaks of the memorial services which, according to patristic teaching, bring comfort to the dead, as well as comfort to the living. Finally, the author treats extensively the resurrection of the dead, the general judgment, and the transformation and renewal of the world. This is the "blessed

Sabbath'' which brings us to the mystical eighth day of creation, the endless day of the Kingdom of God.

We must be grateful to Mr. Vasiliades for his beautiful and splendid book. Although it may not absolutely satisfy all he nonetheless has given us an outstanding study on one of the most difficult doctrines of the Church. The vast amount of source material that he has collected is impressive; his language is smooth; and his exposition clear and convincing. We are in great need of more books of this kind.

George S. Bebis

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*The Church, the Liturgy and the Soul of Man: The Mystagogia of Saint Maximos the Confessor*, translated with Historical Note and Commentaries by Dom Julian Stead, O.S.B. Still River, Ma, St. Bede's Publications, 1982. Pp. 121. \$6.95, paper.

Thanks to Dom Julian Stead, we have a useful and good translation of the celebrated book of Saint Maximos the Confessor under the title *Mystagogia*. Mr. Stead offers a short historical note concerning Saint Maximos where he calls him one of the great Fathers of the Church. He is right in emphasizing the considerable influence Saint Maximos exerted on the spiritual and mystical life of the Church, and he correctly points to Maximos' strict devotion to Orthodox doctrine during the Monothelite controversy.

The author's commentaries are lucid and interesting, although one may question his inclusion of Aristotle and his pondering on ecumenism. I agree with him however that no one can find the lowest common denominator of faith leading us to unity in Maximos' work. On the contrary, true unity would be the result of true faith and love in an oneness of thought, will, and mind under the kinship of God the Word. Statements like, "The Church is not exactly God's incarnation" (p. 19) or "I do not know how concerned the United Nations is with it — that is unity with God" (p. 20) sound a little strange and may be misunderstood.

The commentary on the "Soul, Contemplation, and the Union with God," needs a good psychological background and should be carefully read. The commentary on the "Image of Man" is most successful, and it gives a good insight into Saint Maximos' anthropology in its proper theological and liturgical framework.

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*Treasures of the Holy Land: A Visit to the Place of Christian Origin.* By Veselin and Lydia W. Kesich. Illustrations by June Magaziner. Crestwood, New York: Saint Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985. Pp. 112. \$6.95, paper.

It is not unexpected that Professor Veselin Kesich, who teaches New Testament at Saint Vladimir's Seminary, and his wife should collaborate on the production of a book that is the direct result of their visit to Israel in May and June of 1981. At that time they had occasion to visit Nazareth, Galilee, the coastal towns of Caesarea and Akko, the Sea of Galilee and Capernaum, Caesarea Philippi, ancient Samaria and Nablus, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Masada and the Dead Sea, and the Monastery of Mar Saba in the Judaeen desert. *Treasures of the Holy Land* is more than just a personal record of that trip and it is certainly more than a convenient tourist guidebook to the places associated with the life and work of Christ. It is a beautifully executed little book for the serious explorer of the Holy Land who continues in a tradition that is now several thousand years old and has very special significance for the Orthodox Christian in particular whose historical and religious roots are still to be found deeply implanted in this special space.

The Kesiches have clearly indicated their position in this book:

The gospel witness to the faith of the early community cannot be divorced from the time and place in which the events of faith occurred. The gospels are sensitive to the historical circumstances of the time and make numerous references to geography, for the ministry of Christ was public and was conducted in a concrete time and place. When we see the remains of the places where Jesus was born, proclaimed the gospel, died and rose from the dead, we sense the importance of "sacred geography." Visits to these ancient sites, with both their natural settings and archaeological excavations, illumine our understanding of the gospel records and growth of the Church [p. 5].

A special feature of *Treasures of the Holy Land* is the skillful way in which the authors have integrated scriptural passages into the main body of their descriptive text to provide new insights into the Scriptures themselves and enhance understanding of the Holy Land sites. Hellenistic, Roman, Jewish, early Christian, Byzantine, Muslim, and



modern influences on this “sacred geography” are appropriately noted and explained and a real affection for the Holy Land is conveyed. There is familiarity with current archaeological work also incorporated in this attractive volume that has no photographs but beautiful drawings throughout.

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## †Metropolitan Ezekiel (1913-1987)

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THE MOST REVEREND METROPOLITAN EZEKIEL TSOUKALAS, formerly professor and dean of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (1941-1954) was a native of Patras, Greece, who fell asleep in the Lord on July 22, 1987 in Athens. He received his primary and secondary education in Patras and graduated from the School of Theology of the University of Athens in 1935. Ordained a deacon on September 27, 1934, he served as archdeacon of Patras until November 30, 1935 when he was ordained a priest. Two years later he came to the United States.

While serving as pastor at Portsmouth, NH, he studied philosophy and sociology at Harvard University. He also served the parishes of Haverhill, MA and Hartford, CT. In 1941 he was appointed professor and later assistant dean of Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology, then located at Pomfret, CT. Meanwhile, he continued his graduate studies at Hartford Theological Seminary. With the transfer of Bishop Athenagoras Cavadas in 1949, Father Ezekiel was appointed dean; he served Holy Cross until 1953.

On September 17, 1950 he was consecrated bishop and served the 3rd Archdiocesan District of New England. In 1954, he was transferred to the 2nd Archdiocesan District of Chicago and served until 1959 when he was elected archbishop of Australia.

While in Australia he worked unceasingly to promote the life of the Church, paying special attention to church organization, religious education, and the youth.

In 1974, Metropolitan Ezekiel was elected to the titular see of Pisidea and in 1979 became metropolitan of Kos where he served until 1984 when he retired.

May his memory be eternal.

George C. Papademetriou  
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